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OPERATION SHINGLE

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locked in the bitter defense of the Anzio beachhead line until 22 May 1944. Unlike the landing at Sicily, which took months to plan, the SHINGLE landings took only three weeks. The significance of this operation lies in the well-planned execution of the amphibious assault phase contrasted to the misuse of Ranger forces and the intensity of defending the beachhead line.

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OPERATION SHINGLE

STAFF GROUP 3C

21 MAY 1984

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SECTION I

INTRODUCTION TO THE BATTLE OF ANZIO

(OPERATION SHINGLE)

OPERATION SHINGLE (ANZIO) 22 JAN TO 1 FEB 1944

Few Allied military operations of World War II caused more controversy than that of the Allied landing at Anzio the morning of 22 January 1944. This operation has been categorized by some as an Allied victory and by others as a defeat. In fact, the overall mission of the Allies in this operation is suspect to many historians. Therefore, this Battle Analysis, conducted by a group of amateur historians will mainly concentrate on the maneuver sequence of the Allies and the Axis powers.

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It will also touch on the political decisions and power struggles among the Allies prior to the landing. Documentation is as thorough as the allotted time could provide within available resources.

Poetic license has, in some instances, been taken with the recommended format in an effort to put more life into the events of January 1944.

Operation Shingle (Anzio) took place between 22 January and 1 February 1944 (at least for the purpose of this Analysis). It occurred at and around Anzio, an

ancient port city in west central Italy, situated on a rocky promontory 33 miles south of Rome. (Anzio was the birthplace of the emperors Caligula and Nero, and was a favorite resort of wealthy Romans.) The two sides constituted, initially a relatively small group of antagonists. The Allies consisted of the U.S. VI Corps (U.S. 3rd Division, G.B. 1st Division, and 2 U.S. Ranger battalions). The Axis powers were represented by the 1-104th Pz Grenadier, 15 Pz Division; 1-1 Pzcht Regiment, 1st Pzcht Division; 171 Recon Bn, 71st

Infantry Division; 356th Recon Bn, 356th
Infantry Division; Pzcht Machine Gun
Battalion; 114th Recon Bn, 114 Infantry
Division; 2-1 Pz Grenadier Herman Goering
Division; Luftwaffe Jaeger Battalion.

There are numerous sources of
information available concerning the battle.
A balanced account was gathered mainly
from operational histories, battle journals,
after-action reports, and war diaries. The
best information for the political
decisions leading up to the battle
were gathered from biographies.

The bibliography is lengthy and is found at Tab . Primary sources were obtained through the CGSC Library. The most difficult part of the research was retaining the sources, particularly from other staff sections with a similar requirement. Because the main sources were operational histories, battle journals, and after-action reports, an evaluation of each would be time consuming and distracting to the prospective reader. These sources are first-hand references, therefore, they are not in need of an

"evaluation" particularly by a group of novice researchers in historical facts.

In lieu of the source evaluation, a political analysis of the events leading up to the battle will be offered as this, as much as the battle itself played its role in the historical remembrances of the period. This will also be led in into a review of the strategic setting.

To begin, a "bottom-line" statement is offered: "During World War II, Allied Forces landed at Anzio on 22 January 1944, in a surprise attempt to divert German

forces from the Cassino area and to construct a bridgehead linking with the main front. The strategy failed, and a main link was not formed until 25 May 1944.

It was January 1944, the German Army has been pushed out of Africa, and is being counterattacked at Stalingrad. The Allies have been fighting for four years and although progress has been made, they were going to have to win the war as the Germans certainly were not going to "give up."

General Sir Henry Maitland Wilson had recently succeeded General Dwyer Eisenhower as Supreme Commander in the Mediterranean. This gave the British the position of Supreme Commander in the Mediterranean, and Commander in Chief, Allied Armies in Italy (General Sir Harold Alexander). The ranking American in this theater was General Mark Clark, Commander of the U.S. Fifth Army. General Sir Wilson had recently succeeded General Eisenhower as the Supreme Commander in the Mediterranean. Wilson and

Alfander came under the direct attention of Prime Minister Winston Churchill. Churchill, having spent decades living down his involvement in the planning of the Gallipoli Campaign of World War I, was sure that Operation Shingle would serve as a "cat-claw" to reach behind the Germans and get the Allies out of the interminable bloody fighting in the mountains of Central Italy; ultimately, it would lead to the quick capture of Rome. Clark was not sure that the Germans would panic so easily. He suspected that as soon as the

Germans sized up the magnitude of the operation and realized that the allies could not soon make other attacks elsewhere along the coast, they would stay and fight.

General John Lucas, Commander of the U.S. V Corps wrote in his diary that he felt like a lamb being led to the slaughter. Lucas, who would have the mission of conducting the attack, was a friend of General George Patton. Patton was in limbo at this time due to the slapping incidents of Sicily. He was touring the Middle East, waiting for the Third Army to be

constituted. Before leaving the area,
he advised Lucas, concerning Anzio, that
there was ~~no~~ one in the Army that he
would hate to see killed as much as
him, but that Lucas could not get out
of the situation alive. Patton's doubts only
confirmed those Lucas already nurtured. He
thought that his Corps and the naval forces
involved had too little time to prepare for the
operation and that the strength of the
landing force was dangerously small.
Harking back to the World War I landing
in Turkey that had ended in disaster for

the British and their allies, Lucas later said this the whole affair had a strong odor of Gallipoli. In fact, Clark told Lucas not to stick his neck out and that he had at Salerno and this had gotten him into trouble. Clark thought the best Lucas might do would be to seize and hold a beach-head without making a risky dash inland. Clark also thought that the German's reaction would be unpredictable and he wanted to take no unnecessary chances at Anzio.

Clark's wording of his order to Lucas

was to seize and secure a beachhead in the vicinity of Anzio, and advance on Colli Laziali (the Alban Hills). Clark did not want to force Lucas into pushing inland at the risk of overextending the VI Corps and perhaps losing it. If conditions warranted a drive to the hills, Lucas was free to make one, but Lucas could decide for himself. It was not in Lucas' nature to make Patton-style thrusts across the landscape. A modest man, at age 54, he appeared considerably older; his characteristics as a soldier were

thoroughness and prudence. He may well have been miscast as leader of the Anzio operation, but his superiors knew his qualities when they selected him for the job, and they would have little reason later to blame him for not turning into a "Churchillian wildcat."

The stage is set. A trio of British subjects, Churchill, Wilson, and Alexander, are sitting over a duet of Americans, Clark and Lucas. This forces the Americans to participate, at the ground level, in an operation the Americans do not believe

in or believe will work. Lucas becomes the scapegoat of Churchill's wrath when the "stranded whale" (the beachhead) fails to advance, and is relieved of his command by Clark. It is interesting to speculate what might have happened had any one of Lucas' two preceding Corps Commanders had the VI Corps at Anzio. Their names were Omar Bradley and George Patton! Here then, is the Battle at Anzio.

SECTION II

THE STRATEGIC SETTING

The World War II battle at Anzio Italy was launched at 0200 on 22 January, 1944. "Operation Shingle" as it had been codenamed, was an attempt by the Allies to break the stalemate of the Italian Campaign. The overall success of this battle is questionable. However, to judge it fairly one must begin with a clear understanding of the strategic setting in which the battle took place. A look into both the Germans' and Allies' strategy will assist in setting the stage.

During 1943, Hitler had been put on the defensive, "fighting for every inch". In May of 1943 North Africa had been lost. The German Army was suffering a similar defeat in the East. Reserves were available only as troops could be shifted from one theater to another. While Hitler anticipated the defection of the Italian government, he had no intention of giving ground that could possibly be defended.¹ At the time, his only troops in Italy were those who had arrived too late to be transferred to Africa. With the Allies building strength in the Mediterranean area, he began formulating a plan for the defense of Italy. Hitler supported the conservative advice of Field Marshal Rommel to organize a defense along the mountain passes in the northern Apennines. Although ignored for the time being, Field Marshal Kesselring wanted to keep the Allied aircraft further away from the German border and advocated defense of the entire country. Kesselring had been blind when it came to judging the Italians' political leaning toward the Allies. For this reason and a desire not to over extend the LOCs, Hitler decided to follow Rommel's advice and defend in the northern part of Italy.²

In July of 1943, Hitler moved seven divisions into northern Italy to support Rommel's scheme of defense. However, his primary concern was not to have troops cut-off in the south when the Italian government fell.³ The "ACHSE" plan would cover this contingency and direct the safe flow of troops back up the Italian peninsula to the north. Kesselring became frustrated over Hitler's defensive plans and offered his resignation. Hitler did not accept it. Under the "ACHSE" plan the troops on Sardinia and Corsica would be evacuated to the mainland and Rommel would assume overall command of the land forces in Italy. With only three divisions defending in the Salerno area, the Allied invasion and Italian defection came simultaneously on 8 Sept. While Kesselring was prepared to fall back to Rome, the defensible terrain made this retreat unnecessary. Although Hitler had feared the worst, the Italians' change of support to the Allies really had little effect. The Italian Army ceased to exist as either an adversary to the Germans or an ally to the Americans. In fact, the Italians' weakness had caused the Allies to cancel a planned assault on Rome. On the other hand, Hitler was about to send his troops north when the Allies landed and he discovered that the Italians would not constitute a credible resistance. As things turned out, no troops would be cut off in the south and the "ACHSE" plan would never be executed. Instead, the Germans decided on a dedicated defense in southern Italy and Hitler swung his support over to Kesselring. In October, Rommel was ordered to send reinforcements to the south to enable Kesselring to tie down the Allies in Italy and prevent them from attacking

in the Balkans. On 6 November, Hitler reviewed plans submitted by Rommel and Kesselring for the continued defense of Italy. He endorsed Kesselring's plan which stated, "the Bernhard Line will mark the end of our withdrawals" and Rommel was transferred out of the theater.⁴ Thus Hitler had made the decision to fight the Allies in the southern part of Italy.

On the Allies side, Prime Minister Churchill played almost as dominant a role as Hitler did in the Italian Theater. The war had been going on for four years and momentum was in our favor. However, it was obvious that Germany was not going to lose the war by giving up. Consequently, the Allies would have to win it. Operation Overlord was that plan. The Russians however, were anxious for more responsive support as they fought through the winter of 1943-44 pushing the Germans out of Stalingrad. Churchill also felt the need for a major effort to break the stalemate in Italy and force the Germans to commit their reserves to that theater and decrease the German forces available to oppose Overlord. The Americans had just recently checked the Japanese in the Pacific and were exhausting their resources in preparation for Overlord. For this reason there had been little U.S. support for increasing our energies in Italy and "Shingle" had never received serious support. On 11 December 1943, Churchill met with Gen. Eisenhower on his way home from Cairo and a meeting with Stalin, Roosevelt and Chiang Kai-Shek. The Prime Minister was unhappy to learn of "Shingle's" deteriorating support and on 23 December he used his personal influence to rejuvenate the dead plan. While the Americans were looking for ways to limit their Mediterranean

operations, it was obvious that the British were prepared to utilize more of their resources in the area.⁵ The Allied planning staffs became totally frustrated over the logistical and timing problems associated with "Shingle" and Churchill would have to intervene several more times to insure the plan was not put off again. One final hurdle that he helped clear was the procurement of enough Landing Ship-Tank (LSTs). While 90 were identified in theater, about 60 of these were scheduled to leave on 15 December to steam to England for Overlord. Presently, they were all being used to move men and equipment to Italy from Africa. Without the use of all these LSTs to support a major landing force the Anzio landing could not possibly be successful. Churchill's appeal again brought results from the staff and the last critical problem had been solved. The LSTS could carry a two Division landing force and the Allies already enjoyed air superiority with 2,000 fighters facing the German total of 350. The intelligence estimate stated that a dedicated attack on the stagnant Gustav Line and a follow-up attack in the enemy's rear area at Anzio would combine to force the Germans to withdraw and protect their vulnerable LOCs. This estimate assumed that the landing would be followed by a drive inland to the Alban Hills to cut Route 6, the primary LOC along the western coast. Further battle analysis can best be achieved by a look at the Allied Chain of Command.

1. Sir Henry Maitland Wilson; Supreme Commander in the Mediterranean. He took over from Gen. Eisenhower just before "Shingle" was launched. While this was mostly a political and strategic planning position, firmer guidance for the operation

should have originated here.

2. Sir Harold Alexander; Commander in Chief Allied Armies in Italy. The two Armies were the U.S. 5th Army on the west coast and the British 8th Army on the east coast of Italy. He was well respected by his men.

3. Gen. Mark Clark; Commander of the U.S. 5th Army. He was a good administrator and a courageous man who would support his subordinates whenever possible. He felt confident that he could motivate his men around Operation Shingle although he disapproved of the political motivation behind the plan. His Army had landed in Italy in September and had been advancing slowly along the western half of the peninsula from Naples. The entire chain of command would have been British had the landing been planned for the other side of the Italian coast where the British 8th Army was located. Instead, all the senior staff was British with the Americans being at the lower staff positions.

4. Gen. Montgomery; Commander of the British 8th Army. He was advancing up the eastern coast under very heavy pressure from the Germans.

5. Gen. John P. Lucas; Commander of the 6th Corps of the 5th Army, commander of the Anzio landing. The British were not impressed with Lucas. They thought he had received command because he had put in his time. Gen. Lucas was 54 years old and admitted to being tired. He lacked self confidence and relied too much on his subordinates to help him make a decision. "The more he thought about the task ahead the less he liked it. He determined that he would base his plan on insuring against possible

disaster and not exploiting an extremely problematic success and surprise. 'Army has gone nuts again,' he wrote in his diary. 'The general idea seems to be that the Germans are kicked and fleeing in disorder and nothing remains but to mop up.... They will end in putting me ashore with inadequate forces and get me into a serious jam. Then who will take the blame?'"⁶ Another explanation for Lucas' actions comes from the 5th Army G-3's briefing which made it clear "that Lucas primary mission was to seize and secure a beachhead. Much thought had gone into the order so as not to force Lucas to push on to the Alban Hills at the risk of sacrificing his Corps".⁷ Finally, another powerful incentive for the push inland was removed when the British cancelled the drop of the 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment 10 miles from Anzio.⁸

6. Gen. Lucien K. Truscott; Commander of the U.S. 3rd Infantry Division, a strong leader of the first Americans ashore. He had experience working with the British and got along well with them. While the 3rd I.D. had made mistakes in the African Campaign, it was a seasoned force now.

7. Gen. W.R.C. Penney; Commander of the British 1st Infantry Division, the other half of the landing force. His men had fought with distinction in Africa and had recently been training in mountain warfare. The Division contained several battalions of purely Irish, Scottish, and Englishmen and they fought very proudly particularly during the German counter-attack at Anzio.

As the details of the battle analysis take shape, this strategic setting should help the reader maintain an overall

perspective of the battles' significance. While different conclusions may be drawn on the success or failure of "Shingle", in the end it provided two critical lessons that were followed by the planners of Overlord. First, insure ample strength of the landing force. Gen. Lucas did not feel confident that he had sufficient forces to do more than just hold on to the beachhead. Second, an immediate drive inland must be made to prevent being bottled-up on the beachhead. This of course requires a bold leader with forces available to get the job done.⁹ In this view, Anzio was a costly rehearsal for Overlord.

ENDNOTES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR THE STRATEGIC SETTING

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3. Ibid p 312
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5. Blumenson, Anzio; The Gamble That Failed, J.B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia, N.Y. 1963 p 6.
6. Vaughn-Thomas, Anzio, Holt Rinehart and Winston, New York, 1961 p 36.
7. Command Decisions p 335
8. Command Decisions p 336
9. Anzio; The Gamble That Failed, p 203

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1. Vaughn-Thomas, Wynford Anzio Holt Rinehart and Winston, New York, 1961.
2. Blumenson, Martin Anzio; The Gamble That Failed J.B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia, N.Y. 1963.
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SECTION III

THE TACTICAL SITUATION

III. REVIEW THE TACTICAL SITUATION - OPERATION SHINGLE (ANZIO)

22 JAN - 1 FEB 1944

Generally the weather and visibility in the period 22 Jan - 1 Feb 1944 were clear and cool with good visibility. The weather during the period is shown in fig. 3-1.

Although the weather generally was cold, no reports have been found that indicate that the weather had any adverse effect on the personnel or their ability to fight effectively. Also the effects of weather on natural features, equipment and supplies had no significant influence during the period. Besides the extreme high level of surface water that seldom was more than two feet below the ground - this subject will be mentioned later - the surface of roads and other manmade features were dry during the period, except on the 26th January when it rained.

Generally, the weather was perfect for the conduct of the amphibious landing and the attack inland. The sea was smooth and perfect for the landing. The heavy winds and the rain on the 25 - 26 January had some impact on supply operations of the 3rd Division, but not on the tactical operation.⁴ Visibility was generally good. This proved to become an advantage for the Germans who were able to overlook the entire beachhead from the mountains just about 30 km to the North and Northeast of Anzio. Partly because of this disadvantage many tactical movements and attacks took place during the nights or early in the morning. It seems that the nights were very dark, without artificial lights, moonlight or starlights. I quote, "It was now pitch dark, the best time to attack."⁵ The clear sky allowed the Germans to launch a

DATE	TEMPERATURE	PRECIPITATION	VISIBILITY	WIND	REMARKS 1)
1201-1200)					The Tyrrhenian Sea was smooth and perfect for the transfer of troops and the initial landings at Anzio. 2)
21-22 JAN	cool	no *)	good	no *)	
22-23 JAN	cool	no	good	no	
23-24 JAN	cold	no	fair	no	
24-25 JAN	cold	no	restricted	no	
25-26 JAN	cold	rain, hail and sleet	good	heavy winds	Bad weather disrupted the supply build-up over the beaches. 3)
26-27 JAN	cold	rain, hail and sleet	good	heavy winds	However, this had no sincere impact on the operations of the 3rd Inf Div. See G3 reports. 1)
27-28 JAN	cold	no	clear	no	
28-29 JAN	cold	no	good	no	
29-30 JAN	cool	no	good	no	
30-31 JAN	cold	no	poor	no	
31 JAN-01 FEB	cold	partly foggy	poor	no	
01-02 FEB	cold	no	fair	no	

Figure 3-1

a great air support effort during the period, only interrupted by cloudy weather on the 25 - 26 January and 31 Jan - 1 Feb.⁶ To overcome the German advantage of good visibility, smoke screens were often laid out, primarily by mortars, in support of local attacks. The weather favored surveillance and the use of target acquisition means, but again generally to German advantage. Tactical and strategical mobility were unlimited by the weather, and there are no reports of bad troop morale because of the weather. The morale, on both sides, was very high.

Conclusion about the weather and climate: The weather, which might have had a tremendous impact on the operations, especially the amphibious landing, was almost perfect during the period. This was an advantage to the allies for two or three days, allowing the most perfect and smoothest amphibious landing in history. During the rest of the period the weather gave the Germans an advantage, primarily because of good visibility that allowed the Germans to control the entire beachhead by surveillance, indirect fires, and air support.

In support of the description of the terrain see MAP 1 and overlay 1A, for a 1 to 100,000 scale view of the topography of the area at the time of the operations, the actual area of operations for the 3rd Infantry Division, and the most important terrain features in the area.

A general description of the area of operations.⁷ Anzio is situated approximately 25 miles SSE of Rome at the coast of the Tyrrhenian Sea and was approximately 40 miles West of the front at Cassino. The beachhead, in the form it was finally to assume comprised an area of little more than a hundred square miles, being about ten miles deep and fifteen miles wide in its greatest dimensions. The twin towns of Anzio and Nettuno lay in the southwestern corner, about two miles apart, Nettuno being farther east along a curving bay. The eastern boundary of the beachhead

lay generally along the Mussolini Canal, which was a wide, shallow manmade trough, about 120 feet across at the top but with only a six foot water gap in its bed. It had originally been dug to drain the area and reclaim the marshy ground for farmland. The result was a series of model farms. Just south of the beachhead line lay the Pontine Marshes.

The western boundary of the 3rd Division during the period 22 - 29 January ran along the Anzio-Albano road with the 1st (BR) Division to the west. From the 29 Jan - 1 Feb this boundary was moved 7-8 km further to the east giving the 3rd Division the possibility to concentrate its forces and improve its defensive positions before and during the attack against Cisterne.

The bridges of the Mussolini Canal are numbered #1 through #14 from southeast to northwest as shown on MAP 1. About six miles inland the canal branched. One fork ran northeast toward the mountains back of Cisterne di Littoria. The other ran west and slightly north for another six or seven miles, where it finally petered out into a small, natural stream. This western fork was a natural defensive line in as much as it provided defilade against ground observation, and a small wet gap which was impassable to tanks and vehicles.

There was no high ground on the beachhead. The only significant elevation was a gentle rise just south of the town of Le Ferriere which reached a maximum height of 22 feet above sea level. Elsewhere, the terrain was flat or very gently rolling, except for small ravines formed by the streams. North of the western fork of the Mussolini Canal, where the terrain sloped gradually upward toward the foothills of the Colli Laziali, these ravines assumed greater proportions, being forty to sixty feet in places and very steep sided, but generally carrying a trickle of water in the bottom. The perfectly flat terrain immediately north

of the canal was further crisscrossed by a series of drainage ditches, which varied from small scratches in the ground to a twenty or thirty foot width, and fifteen or twenty-foot depth.

Aside from Anzio and Nettuno, there were no real towns, as such, on the beachhead. In the 3rd Division sector there were clusters of buildings at Acciarella, Conca (Eorgo Montello on some maps), consisting of an old castle, a church, and two or three houses and sheds, Le Ferriere (a group of large buildings clustered around a woolen mill with a prominent, high smokestack), Campo Morto, Carano, and Femina-morta "Dead Woman" (Isola Bella on some maps).

Immediately behind of the beachhead line were several larger towns: Littoria, on the eastern flank; Cisterna, an important road junction on Highway 7 (Appian Way) just northeast of Feminamorta; Cori, a few miles northeast of Cisterna, which nestles low on the western slopes of the Monti Lepini, and Velletri, on the slopes of the Colli Laziali mountains. Both could be plainly seen on a clear day (of which there were all too many) from almost any part of the beachhead.

From the western slopes of Monti Lepini and from the slopes of the Colli Laziali hill mass the Germans on a clear day had perfect observation over every square inch of the beachhead. It was this superb observation that enabled the Germans to mass artillery fire on anything that moved in the Anzio beachhead. And the days were clear during almost the entire period.⁵

Cover and concealment were very scarce on the beachhead. Just north of Anzio-Nettuno, the Padiglione Woods and the Nettuno Wilds provided excellent concealment for supply dumps and troop assembly areas, but where the fighting actually was fought, further to the north, there was practically no vegetation. Only the numerous drainage ditches, ravines, and

gullies together with the hundreds of stone farm houses provided cover and concealment, and then only to the single infantry soldier rather than to large columns, tanks, and other vehicles.⁹ Thus these terrain features heavily effected the way the battle was fought. To overcome German advantage of observation, the nights were used. The dismounted infantry soldier became the major weapons system to be used, and he was to be found along the roads, the ditches, the ravines, and gullies, where he always could find cover for a short period, but often just enough to cover only the body of one soldier at a time.

The above mentioned farmhouses had a tremendous effect on how the battle was fought. Built only a few years earlier as one of Mussolini's prized public works, the Italian stone-mason was a master at constructing formidable thick-walled farmhouses that could be turned into veritable fortresses, easily defended by a handful of men with little more than rifles and a light machine gun. Each of these "podere" would, in its turn, hold up an entire company of infantry and would take a direct assault by tanks to overcome a squad of Germans inside the house.¹⁰

The assault battalions first to land were organized and specially trained into teams to attack and destroy pillboxes, fortifications, and coast-defense weapons, and to cross beach wire and minefields. But, the Germans had expected an allied amphibious operation further to the north aiming directly against Rome. Therefore, only a few mines opposed 3rd Division during the landing.¹¹ The very beachhead itself was a natural and manmade obstacle that impeded the movement of military forces. The whole area was a swampy or marshy area that just a few years before had been turned into usable farmland by a tremendous engineer effort. A dense drainage system with innumerable small ditches and the huge Mussolini Canal was the result that made cross country movement with

heavy equipment such as tanks almost impossible. The Mussolini Canal was to provide a convenient and redoubtable tank trap and an admirable defensive position.

The road net was fairly dense but all of the roads were unpaved narrow farm roads that could not support heavy traffic. The two lane highway from Nettuno to Cisterna was the only paved road in the division's sector. This was also the only avenue of approach in the sector, both for the allies and the Germans. Another limitation was the surface water that over wide, low lying areas of the beachhead was seldom more than two feet below the ground. This made the digging of foxholes an impossible task in most areas. Only the higher ground that the ditches and the canal provided would allow this kind of fortification.¹²

The influence of these terrain features were, of course, a battle limited to the use of the roads and the seizure of the bridges over the Mussolini Canal. This canal was to become key terrain. The only other areas to be labelled key terrain were Cisterna on Highway 7 (The division objective that was first taken after several months) and the mountain slopes to the north and northeast, both of which the Germans occupied during the entire period to their great benefit. The 3rd Division had to fight for the seizure of the Mussolini Canal. This later proved to be vital for the very survival of the entire Anzio beachhead.

UG

29 JAN

31 JAN - 1 FEB

3RD US INF DIV

AREA OF OPERATIONS

27 JAN - 1 FEB 1944

22 JAN
23 JAN

VISION REACH HEAD

23 JAN NIGHT

TG UG

(OR) X3

1:100,000

3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 km

RAVINE INITIAL BEACHES

22 JAN 23 JAN

IN THE

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At the initiation of hostilities on the morning of 22 January 1944, the allied forces involved in all areas of Operation Shingle had a significant numerical advantage. Forces available in the area to oppose the allies totaled approximately 20,000, however, forces positioned in the immediate vicinity of the landing were comprised of only two engineer companies of the 4th Parachute Division, one engineer company and one Panzer Grenadier battalion of the Panzer Grenadier Division and a coastal artillery unit.¹³ On the other hand, the 3d Infantry Division alone, including its reinforcing units, attacked Red and Green beaches with 20,770 personnel and 2,196 separate pieces of vehicles and equipment, while the entire allied landing force equalled about 100,000. The allies also had an initial advantage in firepower with the landing being supported by a 5 minute British Naval Rocket artillery prep of the beaches.¹⁴ This action drew no response from the German coast artillery unit which was defending with one howitzer (7.5 cm), seven howitzers (10 cm), eleven howitzers (15cm), three guns (7.5cm), eight guns (10cm), two guns (10.5cm), three guns (15.5cm) and six guns (17cm).¹⁵

The 3d Infantry Division (Reinforced) attacked in a three regiment configuration with all forward. The 30th Infantry (Reinf) had initial responsibility for Red Beach 1 with the 7th Infantry (Reinf) on Red Beach 2 (Red beach was subsequently consolidated). The 15th Inf (Reinf) had responsibility for Green Beach. Task organization of the supporting units in the 3d Infantry Division was as follows:

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7th Infantry (Reinf)

Attached: 10th FA Bn
PLT, Co A, 751 TK Bn
PLT, Co A, 601 TD Bn
Co A, 3d Med Bn (coll)
Det, 10th Engr Bn
Det, 3d Sig. Co.

15th Infantry (Reinf)

Attached: 39th FA Bn
PLT, Co A, 751 TK Bn
PLT, Co B, 601 TD Bn
Co B, 3d Med Bn (coll)
Det, 10th Engr Bn
Det, 3d Sig Co.

30th Infantry (Reinf)

Attached: 41st FA Bn
PLT, Co A, 751 TK Bn
PLT, Co C, 601 TD Bn
Co C, 3d Med Bn (coll)
Det, 10th Engr Bn
Det, 3d Sig Co.

DIVARTY (-10th, 39th, 41st FA Bn)

Attached: 69th Armd FA Bn (105) (Corps)
Btry B, 36 FA Bn (155) (Corps)
Det, Btry B, 15th Observation Bn (Sound) (Corps)

3d Recon Troop

Attached: Prov MTD Troop
Prov Pack Btry
Det, 10th Engr Bn

504 Parachute Rgmt
1 En, 75mm Pack Howitzer

601st TD En (-3 PLT)
751st TK En (-3 PLT, Co A)
441st AAA En
84th CIL En
10th Engr En (-3 PLT & Det)
540th Engr.

Since the majority of the German Forces in Italy had been sent south to prepare for a major allied thrust, immediate action was required by the Germans to assemble available reinforcements in the Anzio area. By 0600, 22 January, one hour after it was notified of the allied attack, Headquarters Army Group C initiated a pre-established reinforcement plan to assemble troops from other theaters in preparation for its counter attack. The 715th Motorized Infantry Division was moved from southern France, the 114th Infantry Division from the Balkans, the 65 Infantry Division (-) from Genoa, the 362d Infantry Division (-) from Rimini; elements of the newly formed 16th SS Pz Division from Leghorn, and the I Para Corps HQ, 3d Pz Division (-); 71st Division and parts of the Hermann Goering Division all from the Adriatic front started to move in support of this plan. As a result, the Germans were able to increase their strength in the Anzio area to 40,000 in two days, 70,000 in seven days and approximately 90,000 by 2 February. More importantly, the 3d Infantry Division would now face the 1-104th Pz Grenadier, 15 Pz Division, 1-1 Pz Rgt, 1st Pz Division, 171 Recon En, 71st Inf Division, 356th Recon En, 356 Inf Division, Pz Machine Gun En, 114th Recon En, 114 Inf Division, 2-1 Pz Grenadier, Hermann Goering Division, and the Luftwaffe Jaeger En as it tried to advance inland from the beachhead.

The allied order of battle and how it would face this expanded German Force will be covered in the later portions of this analysis, but it is important at this point to examine the action taken, as far as involved units, to establish the initial setting for this battle. The 540th Engineer Regiment (Reinf) was tasked with establishing and organizing the beachhead area. In order to secure the area the 6615th US Ranger Force (P) consisting of three battalions, was to land at H-30 on Anzio and Yellow Beach to destroy coastal defense batteries. The 504 Parachute Rgmt was to air drop near Roman Camp to prevent enemy reinforcements from the north and capture enemy gun batteries. Despite the relative success of this plan the allies failed to capitalize on their initial advantage and were satisfied to occupy a small beachhead rather than continuing their attack. The troop strength and firepower favored the allies on the morning of 22 January, but the lack initiative by the allies allowed the advantage to swing to the Germans by the morning of 26 January.

Tanks, artillery, and tank destroyers were employed by the 3d Infantry Division in securing its beachhead, but it possessed no significant technological advantage in equipment. Initial German obstacles included the placement of mines scattered at the extremities of the beaches. Combined with standard artillery fire, they hampered, but failed to seriously slow the initial allied actions. However, As German reinforcements grew, more weapons became available to the defending force and, while conventional technology in basic weapons systems was equal, the Germans did have an advantage in three particular weapons. The first of these was the 88mm high velocity dual purpose antiaircraft and antitank piece. This was probably the most

outstanding artillery weapon of WWII. The second was the machine pistol, "the Burp Gun" as titled by the Americans, which was distributed liberally among infantry men and proved to be particularly effective for close-in fighting. The third was the 150mm multiple barrel mortar which was mounted on wheels and fired electrically.¹⁷ Although extremely effective, only limited numbers of the 150 mm mortar were found in Italy. Other effective weapons using new technology were the German aerial torpedoes and glider bombs. These were used effectively during the first major air-raids on 23 January and caused immediate action by the US Navy to find a counter-measure against their use.¹⁸ Finally, arriving with the 301st Panzer Battalion came the remote controlled demolition vehicle. While it provided advanced technology, its effectiveness was limited, given most vehicles either broke down or were destroyed prior to being used.

The effects of this technology were somewhat offset by superior numerical advantages, possessed by the allies, in the areas of ammunition supplies and wheeled and tracked vehicles and equipment in general. Additionally, the tactic of employing massed artillery fire on one target was particularly devastating. This fire was effectively coordinated, targeted and controlled by the use of single engine, low-flying L-4 Piper Cubs manned by forward artillery observers. Sometimes the mere sight of one of these aircraft was enough to quiet a German Artillery Battery.¹⁹ Additionally, the numbers of jeeps, trucks and earth-moving equipment gave the allies engineers a significant advantage over the large amount of horse-drawn transportation and manual labor used by their German counter-parts.²⁰

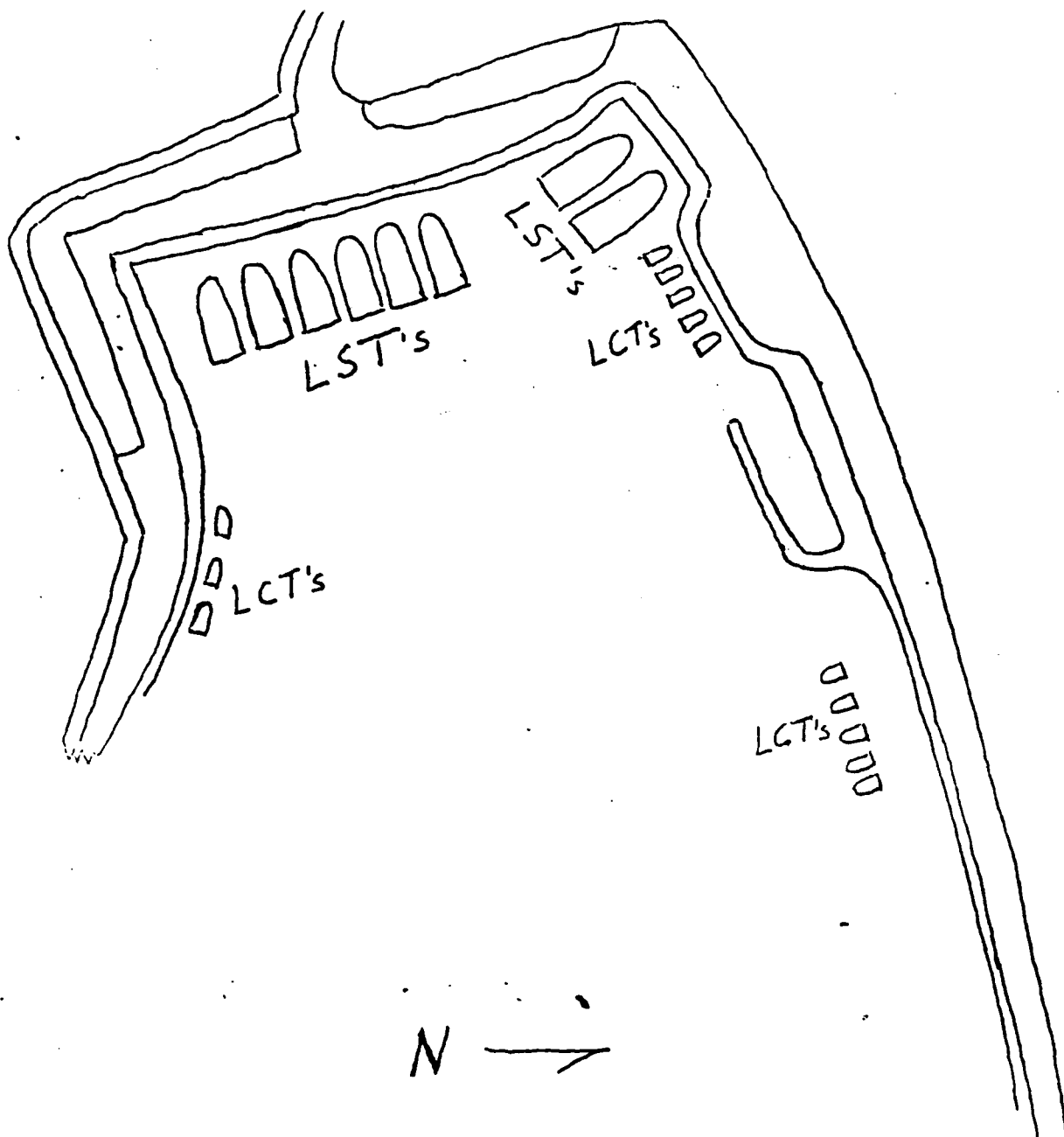
In order for the 3d Infantry Division, as well as its British allies to the north, to be able to take advantage of its numerical superiority in ammunition and vehicles it had to insure this material reached shore. The 540th Engineers, as the beachhead establishing unit, had the initial responsibility for organizing the dump areas and supplying the operating personnel. This was a task for which they had trained extensively. However, despite this practice, a rehearsal as late as 19 January resulted in the loss of forty DUKW's and ten 105 howitzers at sea.

Regardless of failures, supplies would have to come over the beach. While capturing Anzio harbor intact would facilitate the boarding of supplies, the harbor itself was small with a limited capacity for landing ships (see figure 3-2) and incapable of handling liberty ships because of its depth. In order to land the necessary men, equipment, and supplies the 3d Infantry Division needed 33 LCT's (13Br, 15 US), 33 LST (2Br) and 39 LCT's. This was about 40% of the capability available to the entire corps.

The 540th Engineers augmented by Military Police, Signal Corps units and attached Navy Personnel (4,200 personnel) landed at 0215 hours (H+15)min) and had the beaches organized and prepared to receive landing craft by daylight. Despite the first enemy air attacks at 0815, and then continuous every 3-4 hours, all D-Day convoys (LCT and LST) were offloaded by 0800, 24 January. Cargo from the Liberty Ships started to land at D+1.

At this point, it is important to note the three ways in which supplies landed. Poor beach gradients made it impossible to land LCT's for unloading. This required they be offloaded into DUKW's. The two

other methods of landing supplies were by LST's containing preloaded trucks from Naples and by unloading liberty ships direct by DUKW's to beach dumps (load statistics are at Table 3-2). This method sometimes proved dangerous because liberty ships could not get close enough to the shore for the landing craft to avoid large swells. The problem was exacerbated by rapid weather changes which could cause a shut-down of operations in as little as one hour with a twelve hour recovery time. This problem is best exemplified by the results of heavy winds and bad weather which occurred on 25 January. High seas washed Navy pontoons ashore and made it impossible to use LST except by ferry from the LCT's. The problem could have been avoided if sufficient warning time had been available to pull the pontoons ashore. The magnitude of the supply operation, 250 ships and crafts, required close coordination to avoid such problems.



NOTE: The harbor was too shallow for Liberty Ships.

Figure 3-2

Supply Discharge
Operations
(Beach and Port)

Jetty - 4 Mark V American LCT - Maximum
3 Mark III or IV British LCT - Maximum

Cargo Discharge: Heavy - Crane
Light - Manual
LCI - Cargo or Personnel

Harbor Berths - 8 LST - 6 on West wall
2 on North wall

LCI - personnel only

LCT - NA

Liberty Ships - NA

DUKS*- From Liberty Ships : dist 1.75 miles
time 25 min.
Along Side 10 min
Avg Load 3 Ton

From LCT : Avg Tons on LCT 154.5
Avg # of DUKs 55
Avg Load Time 6 min

From LCI : Avg Tons on LCI 43.2
Avg # of DUKs 22
Avg Load Time 13 min

*Small amphibious boats with the capability to travel on land.

Figure 3-3

Despite problems, when operations were good 2554 tons could be landed over the beach in a 24 hour period. When the weather was bad maximum use of the port was made to keep the supply operations going. In order to stop the sea supply actions Hitler ordered continued and more intensive air strikes. Even this failed to significantly hinder operations. In fact, by the end of January stock supplies at the beach-head were at least ten days ahead of schedule and General Lucas felt he could support two more divisions.²¹

The Germans also faced supply problems, but of a different nature. The German strength south of Rome increased so rapidly that there was not a sufficient supply base to support it. Large quantities of supplies were transported from northern Italy. This meant long land and sea lines of communication at a time when allied air attacks were increasing in preparation for the Anzio landing. While fuel and ammunition were available to support tactical operations, they had to be shipped into Italy through the Brenner Pass. This made them subject to extensive bombing resulting from the increased air activity. It was transporting supplies along these long LOCs that would be the Germans major problem in early 1944.

Once organized, the Germans could transport approximately 11,000 tons²² of supplies daily. Through incorporation of hired and purchased trucks this tonnage was steadily maintained and acted to decrease the German supply problems in the Italian theater. However, this program did not become fully effective for two months.

The Germans did have several established supply dumps in the area.

These were shipped south by both rail and trucks. Although sea lanes were available, the bulk of supplies traveled by surface routes. As a result, several systemic problems became evident. First, the heavy rail traffic on poor tracks forced the unloading of many trains far north of their destination. Some of these arrived late and many not at all. Trucks sent to receive the supplies were not coordinated and much time was wasted in waiting. In other cases rerouting of trains forced the rerouting trucks and resulted in the excessive use of fuel. As rail lines were repaired the problems changed.

Now many trains arrived at off-load points simultaneously. The result was insufficient personnel to unload supplies. Once unloaded, excess supplies and material were now available in one area but needed in another location.

In order to solve these problems the Germans established supply dumps closer to the landing area. This enabled the Germans to improve the management and storage of supplies as well as the scheduling of resupply by trucks to forward positions. As a result, the Germans had large diverse supply dumps easily accessible by truck or rail.

As supply demands increased along with allied air attacks, naval resupply became more important. Where previously ships had been used for only a small amount of unimportant supplies to fringe areas, they were now used to relieve the load from the rail and road transports. Still, this method could only compliment land modes, and as long as it was available, rail remained the primary mover. However, despite forward basing the above mentioned difficulties still existed and increased air activities forced movement of supplies by night or from a damaged railway to an available empty train on the other side of the beach.

This method proved effective when rail repairs were projected to take a long time or when at least 60 Km of useable track was available on the other end.

In the specific area of the Anzio front not only did the air attack impede resupply, artillery fire added to the problems and even hindered the removal of wounded from the battlefield. Conditions reached the point where armored cars were used for resupply on a limited basis and battles were sometimes influenced by the lack of available ammunition. Despite these problems the Germans made maximum use of all the methods described above with reasonably good success.

Combat service support activities in the areas of maintenance and personnel operations were minimal due to the period under analysis. For the allies, and specifically the 3d Infantry Division, sufficient personnel and equipment were on hand to initiate and sustain operations. Casualties on the first day were extremely light; 13 killed, 97 wounded and 10 missing.²³ Personnel strength reporting procedures were pre-established and initiated effective 2359 daily, D-Day. Initial replacements were based on two weeks expected losses as requisitioned at D-4. These replacements were held in Naples until needed.

Prisoners of war (PW) were handled by the 540th Engineer's shore regiment once the beachhead was organized and functioning. After the first day VI corps had taken 227 PW's.²⁴ PW were normally delivered by the individual units and evacuated by LST at a rate of 150 per boat. Ten guards were assigned to each group of prisoners. Once support units arrived, the VI Corps Provost Marshal took over PW operations.

The initial posture of the German Forces has already been addressed. Personnel replacement operations were conducted in conjunction with

supply operations. Maximum use of all vehicles was made when moving replacements to the front. Since all units in the region, as well as many from close theaters, had been to the landing area, most of the replacements were new troops, barely out of training and with very little prior combat experience. Despite this, initial personnel and equipment postures had little effect on the result of the battle.

Units were well organized to perform their combat missions. The 3d Infantry Division had task organized to provide maximum flexibility and fire power. Extensive training had been conducted during the two weeks prior to the operation to insure every unit was thoroughly familiar with its mission. Command and control of the mission was initially provided by the Corps CP via a main and tactical Division Command Post. The main CP remained afloat on the HMS Circassia, the TAC aboard an LST until it could be moved ashore.

The 3d I.D. used both wire and radio communications in establishing the beachhead. Radio command nets (primary and alternate) maintained radio silence as much as possible. Visual signals were used as a back-up. US. Forces practiced COMSEC to the maximum extent possible. On the other hand any intercepted German transmissions were immediately passed to the Corps CP. All radio messages that would give an immediate tactical advantage to the Germans were encrypted. The 3d ID had been warned that the Germans could intercept transmissions between 20 - 40 megacycles (MHz), so clear transmissions were only authorized when it would not jeopardize the tactical situation.

Radio links were maintained laterally with other landing units. Once operations were established ashore only one net was maintained between the Divisions and VI Corps. Telephones were used whenever possible, but were always considered unsecure. Telegraph was considered secure, however secret messages were always encoded. All land lines were patrolled

continuously to insure they were not interrupted. Finally, while all communications performed in a generally acceptable manner, and equipment was sufficient for the operation, at no point in the initial beach operation were they severely tested.

As mentioned earlier, once the landing operation was initiated, preestablished reinforcement plans were put into action. At this point German Army Group C Headquarters was in control of the operation and the 20,000 troops in the area. As the force size grew around the beachhead the German 14th Army, commanded by General von Mackenson was given command of operations in the region. By 28 January, the beachhead sector was so dense with units, it was split into three separate sectors for command and control - east, central and west. This decentralization of command and control for defensive operations was the most effective method for such a large force as it conducted defensive operations. However, as the Germans prepared their counter attack plans, final approval rested in the hands of one person, Hitler.

Any attempt at describing the role of intelligence operations within the 3d Infantry Division in isolation from similar operations of 5th Army and VI Corps would prohibit an accurate evaluation of the importance of intelligence information in Operation Shingle. Consequently it is necessary to evaluate the collection, analysis, and dissemination of intelligence at multi-echelons of command.

US Forces pre-landing intelligence estimates were prepared by all major headquarters. 5th Army, VI Corps, and the 3d Infantry Division G2 estimates issued prior to D-Day describe the area of operations in significant detail, each predicting only light resistance to the 3d Infantry Division's (ID) beachhead assault. As late as 16 January 1944, the Fifth Army G2 concluded that the German forces had no fresh reserves and only a few tired replacements which could be used to occupy established defensive positions in the VI Corps zone. The estimate further highlighted an increasing number of indications that German resistance on the Fifth Army Front would continue to ebb due to casualties, exhaustion, and possible lowering morale in enemy units.²⁵

Similarly, 3d ID G2 estimates, as well as those of VI Corps, predicted limited resistance to the initial landing, coupled with the possibility of heavy and highly mobile counterattacks along the inland route to Cisterna. Internal security projections by the 3d Infantry Division G2 seemed to support the general allied conviction that the German forces would know that the invasion was to take place, but that the specific location, time, and date of the assault could remain secure until undertaken.²⁶

The conclusions reached by allied intelligence analysts appear to have been quite accurate. The 3d ID encountered light resistance to its initial landing, with strong German counterattacks occurring in response to unit advances while moving inland. Likewise, a review of the German intelligence situation reveals that 3d ID estimates of potential operations security successes were accurate as well.

Through various intelligence collection means and analysis, German commanders were aware that an allied amphibious landing was to occur. German Air Force photographic reconnaissance of the Naples area revealed the build-up of nearly 400,000 tons of supplies and equipment, and the near total restoration of the once-destroyed ports of the city. However, following these initial photographs, adverse weather and allied air raids upon German aerial reconnaissance aircraft bases precluded further photography of the area.²⁷ Consequently, German intelligence agencies were denied not only observation of the movement of soldiers and supplies to ships, but also the movement of these ships to the assault landing area. These intelligence deficiencies resulted in German coastal defenses being unprepared and caught by surprise, validating allied operations security predictions.

Intelligence acquisition and consumption by both antagonists consisted primarily of the use of photographic aerial reconnaissance.

prisoner of war interrogations, analysis of captured enemy documents, unit ground reconnaissance missions, and limited signal intercept.

As aerial reconnaissance proved invaluable to the German commanders in warning of the impending allied landing, it also served as a significant analytic tool for the allies. Prior to and during the operation, a total of 208 photo-reconnaissance sorties were flown with some 420 interpretation reports issued in support of ground forces. These photo-reconnaissance missions resulted in the total loss of 2 aircraft while 8 others incurred heavy damage during the first 10 days of the operation.²⁸ Photographic interpretation reports were generally passed via radio net to division level from 5th Army headquarters, and by D+3 these reports were timely and accurate enough to be used in targeting allied counterbattery fires. Although precluded by adverse weather conditions, photo-reconnaissance plans in support of the operation called for a minimum of 3 high altitude sorties per day.²⁹

Although extremely useful for terrain analysis and identifying large enemy defenses, there were limitations and difficulties associated with photo-reconnaissance capabilities. Daily damage to the highly sensitive photographic equipment was significant and often resulted in poor quality photographs for interpretation. Further degrading the analytic quality of these photographs was the poor images produced by the existing lenses. From altitudes in excess of 10,000 feet photographic image quality was inadequate for the purposes of defining enemy defenses. In cases where greater detail was imperative, special missions had to be flown from below 10,000 feet. Such low level aerial reconnaissance often resulted in extensive damage to aircraft and further deterioration of the photographic capability.³⁰

The dissemination of photographic analysis in a timely manner proved to be a problem as well. The time needed to interpret and disseminate mission analysis reports was extensive, and the use of these reports below the division level usually proved impractical. With few other sources available, division subordinate commanders were forced to rely upon dangerous ground reconnaissance missions to identify detailed defenses.

Significant use of ground reconnaissance existed at the division level by both the German and allied forces. 3d ID intelligence collection plans assigned detailed ground reconnaissance missions to each regiment on a daily basis while at least three or four special missions per day were conducted at the direction of the Division Intelligence Officer. Likewise, German forces relied heavily upon ground reconnaissance. Due to the German lack of air superiority in the area and the adverse weather conditions which precluded routine air support, US forces repeatedly felt the probing of small German ground reconnaissance units throughout their sectors.

Another valuable source of intelligence proved to be the prisoners of war captured throughout the period. For the Germans, allied captured provided much needed order of battle, personality, and morale-related information. Conversely, German prisoners of

war proved to be a significant source of information concerning the movement of enemy reserves throughout the area for the 3d ID.

In total the 3d Infantry Division captured some 308 prisoners between 22 January and 2 February 1944.³¹ The importance of these prisoners as sources of information is best demonstrated by the method in which they were evacuated, interrogated, and further processed. Upon the 3d Infantry Division's landing at Anzio, a VI Corps Prisoner of War (PW) Cage was established at the beachhead. PWs captured by the 3d ID were immediately evacuated to the beachhead cage where detailed interrogations were begun. PWs were not released until interrogations were complete, and then only after the VI Corps G2 had specifically approved their evacuation. This added administrative and logistical burden so close to the combat area demonstrates the importance of the intelligence which was available through this source.

Captured documents also played a valuable role for both adversaries. Captured German documents proved invaluable in documenting German order-of-battle information for the allied forces. From such documents a significant quantity of information regarding German units, personalities, and supplies was made available to allied analysts. Similarly, German use of captured documents was also extensive, and although not totally clear, evidence does exist which supports the probability that the Germans came into possession of the allied landing plan immediately following the initial landing.³² This immediate insight to the nature of the operation allowed them to readily reinforce their defenses in the landing area with the assurance that the main thrust of the attack had been identified.

Although the magnitude of signal intercept and analysis operations by the German and US forces is not clearly evident, there are strong indications that on a large scale their role in the overall operation was significant.

As mentioned previously, German aerial reconnaissance of the Naples area convinced Kesselring that an allied landing was forthcoming. This conclusion was further supported by January 1944 signal intercepts of allied communications by the Germans which indicated that the attack was imminent. Also noteworthy are the 3d Infantry Division security cautions to friendly units that German tanks had a tank-mounted SIGINT collection capability between 20-40 megacycles and could monitor all friendly radio transmissions in that frequency range. Whether this was simply a normal radio monitoring capability or a true SIGINT collection capability is unclear.

Little reference to allied SIGINT capabilities and utilization was uncovered, except that associated with the Allied SIGINT operation code-named "ULTRA". It is clear that General Clark was made aware of ULTRA information prior to the invasion which depicted major German forces north of the Gustav Line, and that he was aware of the German preparations to counterattack prior to 3 February 1944. There are indications that he passed this sanitized ULTRA information to Gen Lucas when on 3 February 1944 he told Lucas to

stop, dig-in, and prepare for heavy counterattacks. Also likely, but not entirely clear, is the probability that intelligence information obtained through ULTRA was being disguised by 5th Army and passed to subordinate units as information obtained from enemy prisoners of war..³³

How valuable did intelligence collection, analysis, and dissemination prove to be during Operation Shingle? The answer is relatively clear. From photo-reconnaissance and signal intercept means, the German forces were made aware of an imminent allied landing which allowed them the opportunity to begin defensive preparations. Although the allied attack came at an unknown location and occurred some 15 to 30 days prior to the time it had been predicted, the fact that Kesselring was already in the defensive planning process certainly added to his ability to respond rapidly once the landing location was ascertained.

Allied use of intelligence appears to have been equally as important. Intelligence collections plans were thorough, information was passed to commanders in as timely a manner as technology permitted, and all evidence suggests that intelligence information played an important role in the tactical decisions of ground commanders.

In preparation for the Anzio landing, extensive joint planning was critical. US ground forces relied heavily upon the Air Corps to both prepare the beachhead for landing and to interdict German attempts to reinforce their defenses in the area. Planning called for the Tactical Air Corps, aided by strategic air assets, to begin bombing enemy airfields prior to D-Day to destroy enemy air forces and to destroy German/Italian lines of communication between Rome and northern Italy. This effort was intended to insure friendly air superiority over the beachhead on D-Day, while simultaneously interrupting enemy communications north to south prior to the landing to preclude heavy troop and equipment movements. Commencing on D-Day, the mission of the tactical air forces was to shift to the Anzio area where air missions included isolation of the beachhead by destroying bridges, road transport, and enemy columns and troop concentrations within beachhead striking distances.³⁴

Air operations prior to D-Day went generally as planned with actual success unclear. Although damage to enemy air forces was severe, there is no evidence that the allied attempt to sever enemy lines of communications was successful.

Air operations on D-Day however clearly represent an allied success. Some 120 sorties were flown to isolate the beachhead, and enemy troop movements were severely restricted until adverse weather precluded further air support missions.³⁵ Actual field reports reflect no use of air in close support of ground forces at the beachhead, and little along in-land advances by allied ground forces.

Anticipating an allied offensive, Kesselring concluded that the allies would attempt a landing north of the Gustav Line to cut

the German lines of communication and force the German withdrawal. In response he planned the strengthening of coastal defenses.

Constrained by limited manpower and resources, Kesselring elected to establish lightly defended coastal positions while maintaining highly mobile reserve forces which would permit him to mass his forces rapidly to thwart major allied offensive successes. His intent had been characteristic of the German methods of defense throughout the Italian campaign. Supported by Hitler and generally accepted by the Italians, Kesselring believed in manning light defenses with less experienced troops, while maintaining a heavy and highly mobile reserve of experienced and combat effective units to concentrate and destroy enemy penetrations. 36

At lower levels, and as experienced at Anzio, this philosophy evolved into very light and ill-equipped coastal defenses with a series of well-armed and experienced soldiers manning strong points along major routes of advance inland. These strong-points were equipped with machine and anti-tank guns, and in many cases were supported by tanks. Demonstrating excellent fields of interlocking fire, these strong-points proved to be significant obstacles to the allied advance.

Having been halted in their conventional advance in-land by a successful series of such strongpoints, MG Truscott attempted to further the 3d Infantry Division's advance by using the cover of darkness to infiltrate behind enemy units to force their withdrawal. This tactic also failed after stiff resistance at Cisterna was encountered, and heavy enemy minefields stopped the forward movement of tanks.

Having been halted while attempting the infiltration technique, future 3d ID offenses were characteristically more deliberate in their design. Prefaced by heavy artillery barrages and the use of smoke to isolate the objective, elements of the 3d Infantry Division advanced on Cisterna with a more traditional force. Infantry forces supported by Sherman tanks and M-10 tank destroyers however continued to encounter stiff enemy resistance. Although close air support had been planned, adverse weather precluded it and the operation stalled.

German offensive tactics demonstrated a similar combined arms approach. German attacks generally began at 0615 or 1730 hours, and were preceded by heavy artillery barrages. Infantry advances were generally supported by tanks.

On a smaller scale, German platoons routinely attempted to infiltrate through gaps in allied defenses, and to flank defensive positions forcing their withdrawal. Series of such successes were intended to weaken enemy defenses and force their rearward movement. Tank platoons, considered by the Germans as primarily offensive weapons and units, were generally heavily camouflaged with natural materials and deployed on line when used in the defense. In the offense, they were employed in column until resistance was encountered. Upon meeting resistance they would

deploy on line or in the wedge formation, or would attempt a flanking movement while the lead tank continued to draw fire.

In the offense, German forces at Anzio generally attacked in two waves. The initial wave penetrated enemy defenses, attempting to reach supporting artillery positions. The second wave performed clearing operations around the point of penetration, and secured the shoulders.

In preparation for the operation, allied forces trained very similar offensive tactics, integrating the combined arms concept. Assault rehearsals with the Navy were practiced repeatedly at Naples, and night operations training became routine. Consistent combined arms training was the standard.

The Anzio operation between 22 January and 2 February 1944, is best characterized by the German's highly successful use of combined arms forces and integrated strong points along the inland avenues of approach to significantly slow the allied advance towards Cisterna, allowing for the rapid build-up of their reserve forces. The 3d ID, plagued by heavy cloud cover and German strongpoints adopted both infiltration and deliberate attack tactics with only minimal success.

The 3d Infantry Division, having participated in the landings and fighting in North Africa and Sicily, was an experienced and capable combat division. Training in preparation of the Anzio landing had been extensive and included physical conditioning, night operations, and over-the-beach assaults. Since strong enemy defenses were anticipated pre-invasion training also included mine field removal, barbed wire and barrier negotiations, and pill-box assault tactics. Throughout the operation 3d Infantry Division morale and combat effectiveness was excellent. The actual German experience however is somewhat unclear.

Allied intelligence reports on 16 January 1944 speculated that German soldiers were exhausted and that their morale was weakening. Reports indicate that the German soldiers were unused to preparing defensive positions and were inexperienced in mountain operations. It was initially reported that they were without the necessary winter clothing and equipment, and consequently in a poor state of morale.

Most of these reports were substantiated by German PWs encountered immediately following the Anzio landing. PWs reported that the Hermann Goerring Division had been moved into the area for rest and refitting, and was ill-prepared for the ensuing battle.

The reliability of these reports must be questioned in view of the effectiveness of the German defense. Combat reports commencing on D+1 reveal that morale was high and that the units were in fact quite combat effective. The level of the resistance to the allied advances attests to their condition.

Of additional note was the condition and training of US Ranger

forces prior to the landing. During pre-landing rehearsals by the Rangers in the Naples area, training deficiencies had been identified, and included shortcomings in night operations as well as noise discipline. Colonel Darby was later to explain these deficiencies as a result of the loss of experienced personnel during prior engagements. Replacements were newly trained and lacked the combat experience of their predecessors.³⁷

The actual impact of these deficiencies during the Rangers assault at Cisterna is unclear. Whether the Ranger forces alerted German defenses as a result of inefficient and noisy movement towards Cisterna or if the German positions were merely well-prepared and unusually alert is not known. In any event, the Ranger force did begin the landing and the ensuing engagements at less than optimum readiness.

Leadership within the 3d ID and among the array of German forces with which they were confronted appears to have been excellent. Constrained by the fact that their forces had to be moved often in piecemeal fashion to meet the 3d ID advance, the German success can only be attributed to exceptional small unit leadership. Strongpoints, frequently manned at the squad level, proved significant obstacles to the 3d ID advance. Reinforcements were moved vast distances rapidly and efficiently, and were prepared to defend immediately upon reaching their positions. Such accomplishments attest to the leadership and training of the German forces opposing the allies.

Leadership in the 3d ID appears to have been equally as noteworthy. Unit commanders demonstrated excellent battlefield flexibility, and the unit's noncommissioned officers were awarded many medals of valor and bravery.

In the early morning hours of 22 January 1944, VI Corps of Lt. Gen. Mark W. Clark's Fifth Army landed on the Italian coast below Rome and established a beachhead far behind the enemy lines. "In the four months between this landing and Fifth Army's May 1944 offensive, the short stretch of coast known as the Anzio beachhead was the scene of one of the most courageous and bloody dramas of the war. "The Germans threw attack after attack against the beachhead in an effort to drive the landing force into the sea. After the Allied landings in southern Italy, German forces had fought a delaying action while preparing defensive lines to their rear. The main German defensive barrier guarding the approaches to Rome was the Gustav Line, extending across the Italian peninsula from Minturno to Ortona. Enemy engineers had reinforced the natural mountain defenses with an elaborate network of pillboxes, bunkers, and mine fields."³⁸

The Germans had also reorganized their forces to resist the Allied advance. On 21 November 1943, Field Marshall Albert Kesselring took over the command of the entire Italian theater; Army Group C, under his command, was divided into two armies, the Tenth facing the southern front and also holding the Rome area, and the Fourteenth guarding central and northern Italy. "In a time otherwise filled with defeat, Hitler was determined to gain the prestige of holding the Allies south of Rome."³⁹ Opposing the German forces was the Allied 15th Army Group, commanded by Gen.

Sir Harold R.L.G. Alexander, with the U. S. Fifth Army attacking on the western and the British Eighth Army on the eastern sectors of the front.

"The strategy decided upon by the Allied leaders, an amphibious landing behind the Gustav line, had been under consideration from the time when German intentions in Italy became clear. By late October 1943 it was evident the Germans intended to compel the Allied forces to fight a slow, costly battle up the peninsula. The purpose was to turn the German flank, gaining a passage to the routes to Rome, and threaten the German lines of communication and supply. The plan for the landing was called SHINGLE."⁴⁰ The final plans for SHINGLE were completed on 12 January 1944. D-Day was set for 22 January, 0200 hours. "After the landing and during the critical days of the Anzio campaign in mid-February, operations on the southern front, except at Cassino, were at a standstill."⁴¹ "Because of this stalemate in the south, the enemy was able to hold the Fifth and Eighth Armies at bay with fewer troops than he assembled before Anzio in an all-out effort to drive VI Corps from its beachhead."⁴²

At the beginning of February General Mackensen's Fourteenth Army was preparing to strike. "Hitler had personally ordered that the 'abscess' below Rome be removed, whatever the cost."⁴³ Having stopped the Allied drive toward Cisterna and Campoleone, the Germans renewed their preparations for an all-out offensive toward the Anzio beachhead. For the first two weeks of February, while these preparations

were under way, the Germans believed that VI Corps might again attack toward Cisterna and Campoleone in an effort to break out of the beachhead. They also thought that the Allies might attempt another amphibious landing northwest of Anzio, coordinate it with a drive from the beachhead area across the Moletta River to the northwest. "The German attacks of early February were designed not only to pave the way for the enemy's main offensive but also, by maintaining constant pressure on VI Corps, to prevent the Allies from reorganizing for a new drive out of the beachhead."⁴⁴ The situation and mission of the Fourteenth Army was summarized on 3 February in its Journal as:

"Fourteenth Army intends to prevent the enlarging of the Anzio beachhead, and to prepare an attack to eliminate this area. A number of army units are remnants from various organizations and are not able to mount an attack at this time; during the last days, they had to be used in the front lines to prevent an enemy breakthrough. With these forces a strong assault to conduct the attack on the beachhead cannot be organized. Therefore, Fourteenth Army has planned attacks with limited objectives to suit various situations as they arise. When the enemy is weakened by these attacks, an all-out counter offensive will be launched."⁴⁵

At the same time, Fourteenth Army again expressed doubt that the Anzio beachhead could be eliminated with the forces available to it, and requested Army Group C to attach additional troops in order that the ultimate mission of

eliminating the beachhead might be accomplished. "The initial assault to secure the beachhead by VI Corps was to land over the beaches near Anzio and Nettuno in three simultaneous assaults. All the allied forces would link up to seize and consolidate a beachhead centering on the port of Anzio."⁴⁶ The Germans foresaw the possibility of an Allied landing behind the Gustav Line, and strengthened the coastal positions that were in the most likely invasion areas as best they could with the limited number of troops at their disposal. "Since it considered the number of German troops in Italy barely sufficient to hold the southern front and strengthen the rear areas, the German High Command in December 1943 worked out an elaborate plan to reinforce German troops in Italy with units from France, Germany, and Yugoslavia in the event of an Allied landing."⁴⁷ Thus it was that while the Germans realized that they did not have available sufficient forces to prevent an Allied landing behind the Gustav line, they believed that they could contain and destroy it by hurrying reinforcements into Italy to meet the emergency. "Their plans did not contemplate the withdrawal of any substantial number of troops from the southern front to meet such a threat to their rear."⁴⁸

The bitter and continuous struggle along the southern front from November 1943 into January 1944 forced the enemy to commit all of its divisions that were fit for combat to stop the Allied offensive at the Gustav Line. "A lull in the fighting in early January permitted the strengthening

of forces in the Rome area to resist an invasion. Under the command of I Parachute Corps, the 29th and 90th Panzer Grenadier Divisions were assigned to the Rome coastal sector; the Herman Goering Panzer Division was held as a mobile reserve between Rome and the southern front. But when the American Fifth Army attacked across the Garigliano on 18 January, the Germans rushed the 29th and 90th Panzer Grenadier Divisions southward."⁴⁹ On the eve of the Anzio landings the Germans had almost denuded the Rome area of combat troops in order to stem the Allied drive in the south. The Germans had observed the regrouping of Allied troops and Allied Naval preparations in the Naples area; and they believed that the Allies had sufficient strength both to maintain the offensive along the main fighting front and to attempt a landing in the Rome area."⁵⁰ But they hoped to delay such an invasion by counterattacking in the south; then, after stopping the Allies on the Garigliano, they would draw back enough troops to check a landing.

As the first wave of craft hit the beach and men rushed for the cover of the dunes behind, there was no enemy to greet them. "Pushing rapidly inland, the astonished troops soon realized that the highly unexpected had happened. The Allies had caught the Germans completely off guard. Although the Germans knew an amphibious landing was impending, they believed that it would not occur until somewhat later."⁵¹ The two German divisions that had been assigned to guard the coast had been sent to the southern front only three

days before, and the coastal sector and area south of Rome were held by only skeleton forces. Consequently, except for a few small coast artillery and antiaircraft detachments, the only immediate resistance to the Anzio landing came from scattered elements of the 29th Panzer Grenadier Division. "Only three engineer companies and the 2nd Battalion, 71st Panzer Grenadier Regiment, had been left to guard the coast from the mouth of the Tiber River through Anzio to the Mussolini Canal; one 9-mile stretch of the coast was occupied by a single company."⁵² Furthermore, the troops in the Anzio area had not been warned that an Allied landing was imminent. The coastal defenses were limited to scattered mine fields along Peter Beach used by the British 1st Division: some pillboxes, most of which were not even manned; and scattered Artillery pieces--a few 88's and several old Italian, French, and Yugoslav pieces--most of which were not even fired against the attackers. By 24 January the 3rd Division had occupied the right sector of the initial beachhead along the Mussolini Canal.

"Although the Anzio landing and initial Allied buildup were virtually unopposed by German land forces, the enemy reacted swiftly to meet the emergency."⁵³ Headquarters of Army Group C immediately alerted elements of the 4th Parachute and Hermann Goering Panzer Divisions south of Rome and ordered them to defend the roads leading from Anzio toward Colli Laziali. At 0600 on 22 January, Germany set in motion the prearranged plan to rush troops from

outside of Italy to stem the Allied invasion. Two divisions and many lesser units started at once from France, Yugoslavia, and Germany itself. Three divisions of the Fourteenth Army in northern Italy were alerted and left for the Rome area on 22-23 January. To command the defense, I Parachute Corps reestablished its headquarters in the area below Rome at 1700 on 22 January. "All available reserves from the southern front or on their way to it were rushed toward Anzio: these included the 3rd Panzer Grenadier and 71st Infantry Divisions, and the bulk of the Hermann Goering Panzer Division. While these forces were assembling, the German Air Force bombed the beachhead area and its supporting naval craft in order to delay an Allied advance inland."⁵⁴ For the first two days, the German defenders believed that they were too weak to stop an Allied advance against Colli Laziali; but from the evening of 24 January they were confident that they could contain the beachhead forces and, as soon as they had substantially completed their concentration, launched a counterattack that would wipe out the Allied beachhead.

Army Group C on 24 January ordered the Fourteenth Army to take over the command of the German operations before Anzio. "When the Fourteenth Army, commanded by Gen. Eberhard Von Mackensen, assumed control on 25 January, elements of eight German divisions were employed in the defense line around the beachhead, and five more divisions with many supporting units were on their way to the Anzio area."⁵⁵

By 28 January. Fourteenth Army had assigned command of the forces defending the eastern sector of the beachhead perimeter (before Cisterna) to the Hermann Goering Panzer Division; of the central sector (before Campoleone) to the 3rd Panzer Grenadier Division; and of the western sector (behind the Moleta River) to the 65th Infantry Division. Behind this perimeter other units were grouped for counterattack.

"Before the end of D-Day the Germans were estimated to have 20,000 troops in areas from which they could drive rapidly toward the beachhead. With the advantage of good communications, roads, and railroads, and in spite of Allied air interdiction, they had doubled that figure by D plus 2, and continued to increase it to more than 70,000 by D plus 7."⁵⁶

VI Corps constantly consolidated its positions during the period 24-29 January. While awaiting reinforcements, Allied troops probed along two main axes of advance toward the intermediate objectives of Cisterna and Campoleone.

"The 30th Infantry was halted by a company of Hermann Goering Panzer Division. Intrenched around the road junction half-way to Ponte Rotto. With unexpected strength the veteran Hermann Goering Panzer Division had blunted the spearheads of the 3rd Division attack."⁵⁷ The 3rd Division resumed its push toward Cisterna on 26 January. Again Germans were making every effort to keep the Americans from reaching as far as Highway number 7. To exploit an apparent German weakness, General Penny, British, dispatched the 24th Guards Brigade, with one squadron of the 46 Royal Tanks and one

medium and two field regiments of artillery in support, to take the Factory (Aprilia) near Carroceto. The 3rd Battalion, 29th Panzer Grenadier Regiment (3rd Panzer Grenadier Division), had occupied the factory the night before on 25 January. The Germans were defeated but counterattacked strongly the next day.

Far more dangerous to both beach and shipping were the constant Luftuffe raids. "The German Air Force put up its biggest air effort since Sicily in an attempt to cut off Allied Supplies. Small flights of fighter-bombers strafed and bombed the beach and port areas every few hours. The most serious threat, however, was the raiding by medium bombers squadrons hastily brought back from Greece and the torpedo and glider bombers from airfields in southern France. Skimming in low at dusk from the sea through the smoke and hail of ack-ack fire, they released bombs, torpedoes, and radio-controlled glider bombs on the crowded shipping in the harbor."⁵⁸ In three major raids, on 23, 24, and 26 January, they sank a British destroyer and a hospital ship, damaged another hospital ship, and beached a Liberty ship. The two heaviest raids came at dusk and midnight on 29 January, when 110 Dornier 217's, junkers 88's, and Messerschmitt 210's sank a Liberty ship and the British antiaircraft cruiser Spartan.

As previously noted, VI Corps prepared to launch its offensive toward Cisterna and Campoleone on 30 January, and the German forces were being regrouped for the major counter-

offensive. "Thirty infantry battalions. supported by armor and artillery. were being organized into combat groups for this offensive, and six more infantry battalions were to be held in reserve. The German main line of resistance was established in front of Cisterna and Campoleone. and forward positions were strongly held."⁵⁹

The Germans had not only succeeded in rushing up reinforcements in wholly unexpected strengths, but had also built up a strong system of defenses barring the approaches to Cisterna and Campoleone. Every house and village was concerted into a strong point and these were connected by well-camouflaged machine gun nests and rifle pits. Tanks and roving self-propelled guns and massed artillery and nebelwerfer fire supported these positions. "Sniping and infiltration by small enemy groups continued long after key defense points were seized. and the infantry continually had to mop up bypassed pockets of Germans who fired on them from the rear."⁶⁰

While the Allied offensive of 30 January-1 February made only one important penetration. the German Fourteenth Army was forced to commit the bulk of its combat forces to stem the VI Corps advance. In fact. Allied armor came very close to effecting a breakthrough at Campoleone Station on 31 January. "For these first nine days. Fourteenth Army had to postpone a large-scale counterattack to wipe out the Allied beachhead, and to limit its immediate mission to defense-- preventing the Allied troops from expanding their beachhead

and inflicting on them as heavy losses as possible."⁶¹

"On 1 February Fourteenth Army for the first time expressed doubt that it had sufficient strength to eliminate the Anzio beachhead. The German losses in the fighting of 30-31 January were heavy. Nevertheless, Fourteenth Army was ordered to hold assault troops in readiness to launch a counteroffensive at the first opportune moment."⁶² The Germans themselves counterattacked strongly west of Cisterna at dawn on 1 February with the 71st Infantry Division and the Hermann Goering Panzer Division. But German attempts on 1-2 February to recover their former forward positions in front of their main line of resistance were repulsed. On 2 February the Germans were also forced to draw back their main line of resistance in the 71st Division sector north of Carano: this division had suffered heavy losses and had to shorten its front in order to strengthen its position.

As soon as VI Corps halted its offensive after three days of heavy fighting, Fourteenth Army renewed preparations for a major counterattack. The weight and accuracy of Allied artillery fire delayed this attack. "The Germans attributed the partial failure of the counterattack launched by the Hermann Goering Panzer Division on 1-2 February to the demoralizing effect of Allied artillery fire. On 2 February, the artillery communications net of combat Group Graeser was totally destroyed; the loss of fire direction charts forced a 24-hour postponement of the counterattack on the bulge north of the Factory."⁶³ On 2 February also, Army Group C ordered

the transfer of troops to meet the threatened invasion at Civitavecchia. and announced its intention of transferring some troops from Fourteenth Army to bolster the Cassino front. Such factors were to limit the German Counterattack of 3 February to a preliminary drive against the bulge north of the Factory, and require a postponement of the major German counteroffensive to 16 February.

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SECTION IV

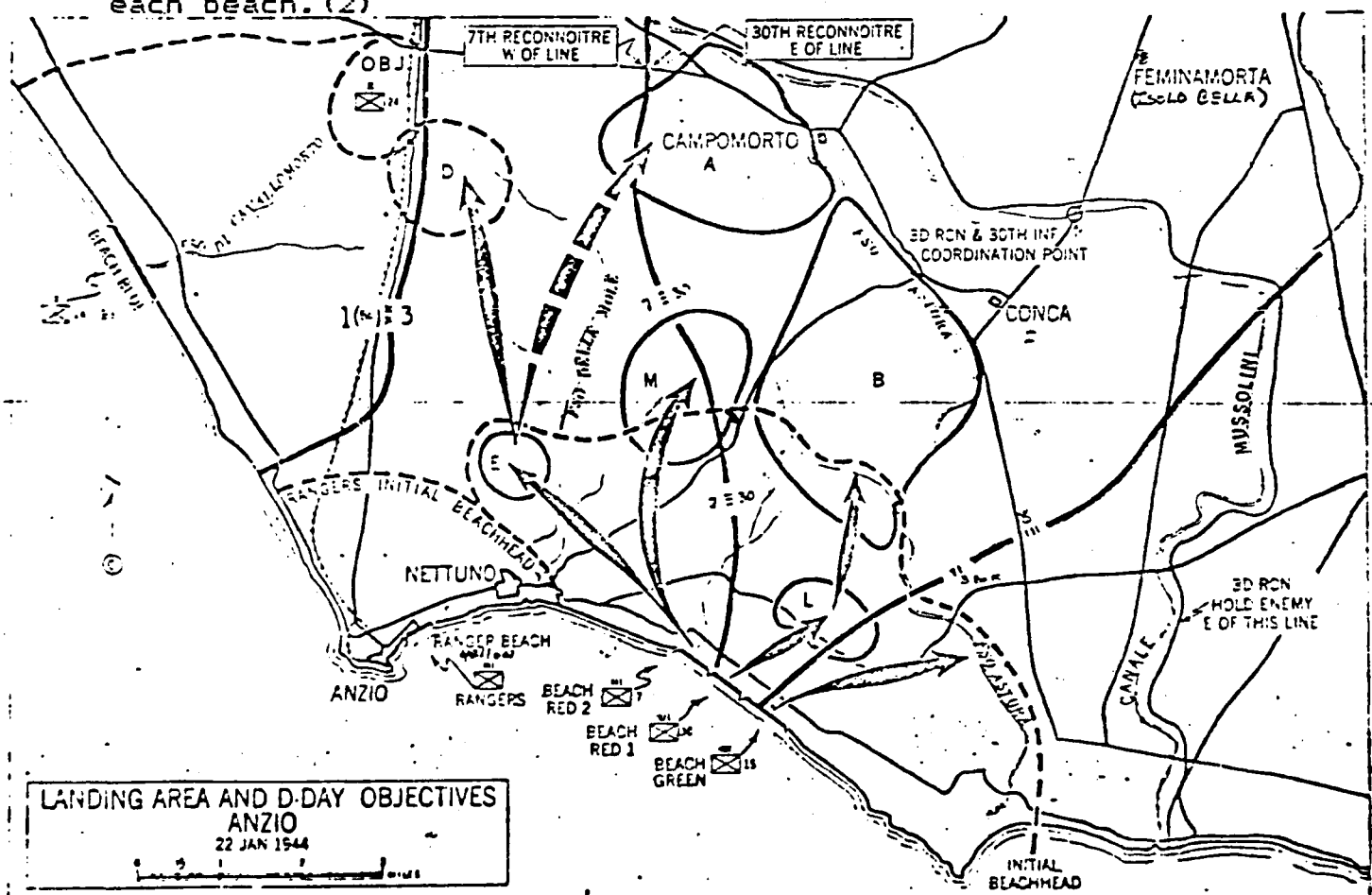
THE FIGHT

3RD INFANTRY DIVISION OPERATIONS

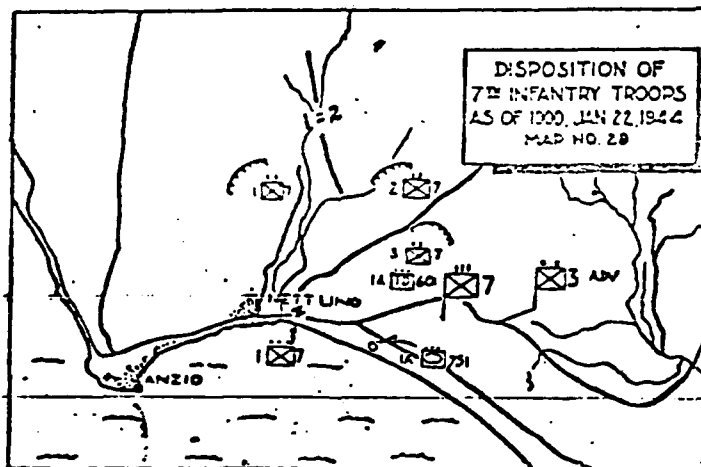
AT ANZIO

22 JANUARY 1944

The Third Infantry Division mission was to land, destroy enemy beach defenses, and capture an initial beachhead line extending generally to the line of the Mussolini Canal and its northwest branch. The division's left boundary was the highway between ANZIO and ALBANO. (1) The division and its attached units landed on schedule at 0200 hours in the beach area designated X-RAY. X-RAY was subdivided into four assault beaches: YELLOW BEACH just east of the town of ANZIO was assigned to the 6615th Ranger Force (Provisional), RED BEACH (F920165 - F930156) was subdivided into RED BEACH 2 on the left (west) which was assigned to the 7th Infantry Regiment and RED BEACH 1 on the right assigned to the 30th Infantry Regiment, and GREEN BEACH (F930156 - F936152) on the division's right flank across which the 15th Infantry Regiment would land. The three regiments landed simultaneously with one beach assault battalion per regiment (1-7 Inf, 2-30 Inf and 3-15 Inf) on each beach. (2)



On RED BEACH 2, 1-7 Infantry cleared the undefended beach obstacles and had begun moving toward OBJECTIVE E (F8721) by 0325 hours. The battalion captured 30 very surprised Germans from the engineer companies of the 29th Panzer Grenadier Division on Objective E. (3) 2-7 Inf landed at 0240 hours and moved to OBJECTIVE E-1 (F910205) from which it sent patrols to the north and northeast. One strong reconnaissance patrol reached OBJECTIVE D along the ANZIO - ALBANO road. 3-7 Inf was the last battalion to land and had occupied OBJECTIVE E-2 (F9220) by 1200 hours. In the afternoon the regiment was ordered to "occupy areas A and D (an area 4000 yards east and southeast of the road junction at F962268) with strong combat patrols and move the whole regiment in at night if the area was found tenable". (4) 1-7 Inf established contact with the Rangers at F8718 who had landed at YELLOW BEACH at 1620 hours. At 1800 hours the 3-7 Inf began its move from E-2 to A closing in the area southwest of CASALE TORRE DI PADIGLIONE by 2315. At 1830 hours 2-7 Inf began its move from E-1 to D. The 1-7 Inf was placed in regimental reserve at 2000 hours. On this day the 7th Infantry had sustained the bulk of the 3ID casualties which were 10 KIA (8 to mines, 1 drowning and 1 gunshot wound) and 29 WIA. (5)



On RED BEACH 1, 2-30 Inf reached the NETTUNO - ACCIARELLA road, 2000 yards behind the beach, by 0330 hours. No machinegun, mines or artillery fire were encountered in their move to OBJECTIVE L (area southwest of the ASTURE STREAM from F930215 to F967175). Reconnaissance patrols were sent north to OBJECTIVE B and by 1200 hours the crossroad and bridge over the stream at LE FERRIERE (F962241) had been seized. At noon the battalions were located as follows; 2-30 Inf at F9421, 1-30 Inf at F9423 and 3-30 Inf at F935215. (6) During the afternoon and evening the

regiment moved to the area CAMPO MORTO - LE FERRIERE - BOTTACCI (F9427 - 9624 -9325). The regimental history of the 30th Infantry states that A/1-30 repulsed an attack by 5 tanks near LE FERRIERE; (7) however, the 3ID G3 journal records no fighting by 1-30 Inf until 0700 hours 23 Jan. (8)

On GREEN BEACH, 3-15 Inf met no resistance and occupied a position at F970145 to protect the division's right flank. 1st and 2d battalions landed and initially occupied F935180 and F947145 but they were moved to the northwest vic. OBJECTIVE M (F9322) in the afternoon to protect the division's left flank. 3-15 Inf was issued instructions to move to F996220.

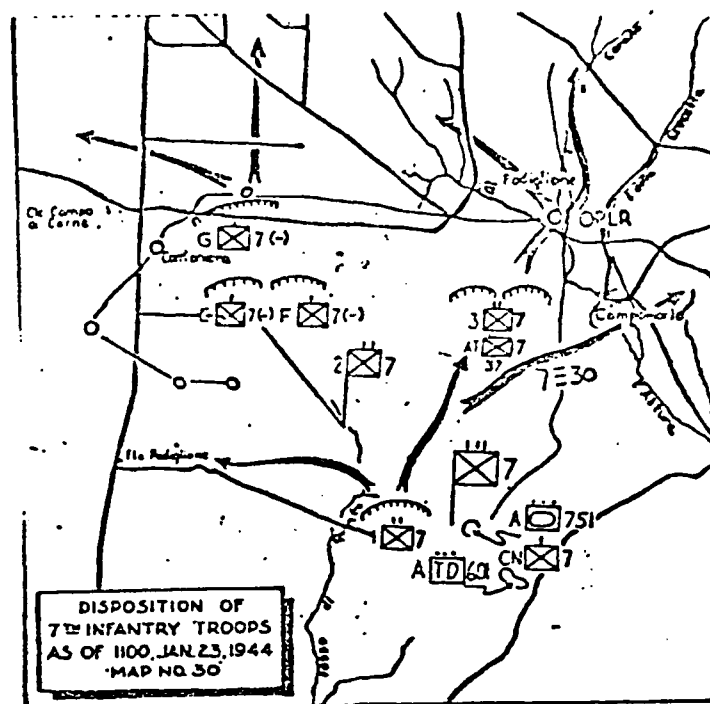
The 3d Reconnaissance Troop and the 3d Provisional Reconnaissance Troop (-), elements of which landed with the assault battalions, occupied and destroyed the following bridges over the MUSSOLINI CANAL: Bridge #1 (F013148), #2 (F008184), #3 (F026218) #4 (F027219), and #5 (F030236). Bridges # 6 and 7 were captured but not destroyed. The 3d Provisional Recon Troop destroyed 3 AA positions, 3 armored cars, killed 5 and captured 6 while taking Bridge #1. (9)

By 1700 hours the commander of the I Parachute Corps and his headquarters staff had arrived in the beachhead area to coordinate the defensive operation. Advance elements of the Hermann Goering Panzer Division and the 3d Panzer Division began arriving in the evening. (10)

23 JANUARY 1944

This day was devoted to the consolidation of the beachhead line along the MUSSOLINI CANAL and its northwest branch. Of note is the fact that no offensive orders were issued by either VI Corps or 3ID other than compliance with the initial landing plan which called for clearing the area south of the canal and patrolling. Aggressive local counterattacks by the few units of the Hermann Goering and 29th Panzer Grenadier Divisions were sufficient to swing the tactical initiative to the Germans.

By noon on 23 January the 7th Infantry had advanced to the road between CAMPO DI CARNE and PADIGLIONE (F858268 - F874268). Reconnaissance patrols were across Bridge #14 over the northwest branch of the canal. At 1250 the Ranger Force, which was now attached to the 3ID, relieved the 1st and 2d Battalions from their positions along the ANZIO - ALEANO road. 1st and 2d Battalions moved to an assembly area vicinity F9322(11) and became the division reserve. (12) At 1400 a patrol from 3-7 Inf had a brief skirmish with a tank and 15 infantrymen at F863310.



Just prior to dawn 3 companies from the 71st Pz Grenadier Regt, 29th Pz Grenadier Div moved down the road from CAMPO MORTO to LE FERRIERE and destroyed the bridge in the town as the troops from the 30th Inf were arriving. (13) At 0400 hours 1-30 Inf had their first substantial contact at F991252. Tanks and infantry from the Hermann Goering Division had been able to cross over the canal at Bridges #8 and 9. At 0920 hours artillery fired on this force which had moved to F992253. A second concentration was fired at 1012 on F942282. (14) At 1600 an additional enemy force of 3 tanks, a halftrack and troops advanced down the CISTERNA CONCA road, crossed Bridge #8 and overran the outpost guarding the bridge. Three American tanks, two tank-destroyers and E/2-30 retook the bridge at 2015. During this period a German patrol also seized Bridge #7. During the evening the 30th Inf shifted west as its sector was now between FADIGLIONE (east of Bridge #13) and CONCA (west of Bridge #8).

During the morning the 15th Infantry was ordered to reconnoiter vicinity F9922. This mission was changed in the early afternoon to relief of the 30th Inf units east of the CONCA CISTERNA Road (Bridge #8). (15) 3-15 Inf, with three platoons from A/751st Tank Bn, attacked Bridges #6 and 7 while 2-15 assaulted Bridge #5 after dark. Bridge #7 was not secured until 0800 24 Jan. 2-15 relieved 2-30 on Bridge #8 about 2200 hours. Bridge #6 was also captured at night by 2-15 Inf.

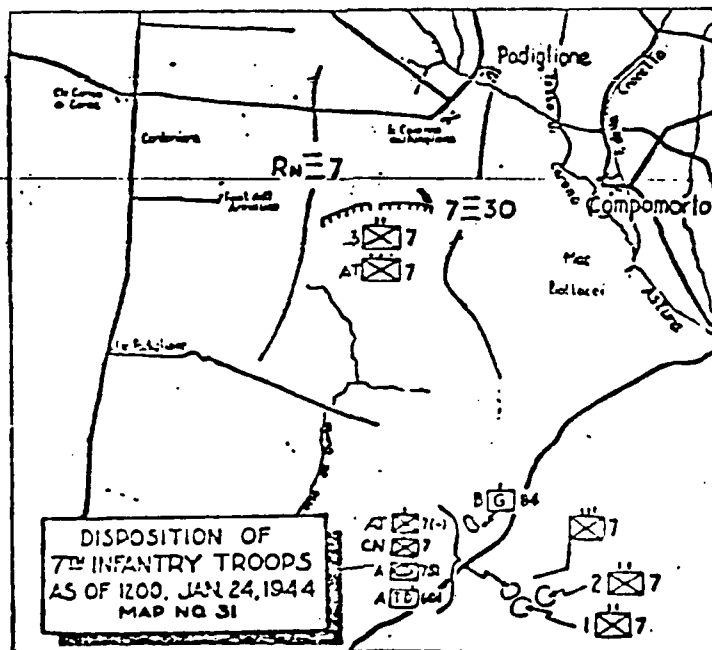
The 504th Parachute Regiment was attached to the 3ID and assigned the mission of relieving the 3rd Recon Troop along the MUSSOLINI CANAL from Bridge #1 north to Bridge #5. At 1800 hours 1/504th attacked to drive an enemy force back across Bridge #2 (6004183). At 2400 hours the 504th relieved 2-15 Inf and continued the attack on Bridge #5. (16) Of note is the fact that within an 18 hour period three different 3ID units were given the mission of retaking Bridge #5 (1-30, 2-15 and 504th).

The two recon troops were withdrawn and ordered to regroup on 24 January (17) after the capture of their CO, Maj Crandall, on the night of 23-24 January at Bridge #5 when a battalion from the Hermann Goering Pz Division attacked from SESSANO. (18).

24 JANUARY 1944

On 24 Jan the 3ID consisted of five major combat units; 7th, 15th, and 30th Infantry Regiments, the 504th Parachute Regiment and the Ranger Force. Its front line extended from the ANZIO - ALBANO Road to the Northwest Extension of the MUSSOLINI CANAL and then south along the Canal to the sea. By 1010 hours the last bridge site had been recaptured and 3ID began to orient operations toward the town of CISTERNA

The Rangers with B/601st TD attached continued to move slowly north on the division's left flank.



The 3-7th Inf west of PADIGLIONE spent an uneventful day with little contact other than one firefight with a German patrol at 1310. Elements of 3-7 Inf and the Rangers maintained contact with the British 1st Division which was advancing on the left.

The 30th Infantry completed its moves west during the morning and prepared to send infantry/tank company teams across both Bridge #12 (F950278) and Bridge #13 (F941279) in the afternoon. These units were to advance as far as they could go. (20) The two company/teams jumped off at 1510 with F/2-30(+) crossing Bridge #12 attacking NE toward the CLE PRATONE RJ at F980297 and L/3-30(+) crossing Bridge #13 and attacking north to seize the DELLA CROCETTA RJ at F950295. The purpose of this operation was to seize control of the road running from CARANO - CROCETTA - PONTE ROTTO - CISTERNA as this was the SW approach into CISTERNA. Company F crossed Bridge #12 but was soon held up next to a small bridge about 300 meters up the road. L Company was able to advance to within a few hundred yards of the CROCETTA RJ where it was pinned down until the next morning. (21)

In the 15th Inf sector F/2-15 Inf captured Bridge #7 at 0800 hours. 2-15 infantry/tank/tank destroyer teams were ordered to cross Bridges #8 (F991252) and #6 (G015240) and go as far as they could go, to seize and hold ground on the afternoon of 24 Jan. (22) The units did not attack until the morning of 25 Jan (23) failing to support the attack of the 30th Inf.

On the division's right flank the 504th Para Rest retook Bridge #5 at 0800 with tank support from 3/C/751st then cleared Bridge #2 at 1010. The regiment was ordered to cross the MUSSOLINI CANAL vicinity Bridges #4 and 5 and seize the RJ at BORGO PIAVE (G051204) on 25 Jan. This attack, supported by 1/A/751st and C/84th Chem, was to be the division's diversionary attack.

All was not going well for the 3ID Headquarters during this period. In addition to the mounting German resistance General Truscott was wounded in the leg during an air raid. Although not serious, it compounded a case of laryngitis and required a cast. (25)

On the other side, the Germans had concluded that the danger of an Allied breakthrough had been removed assessing 24 January as "uneventful". (26) On this day Army Group C Hqs ordered XIV Army to take over command of the beachhead and attack.

25 JANUARY 1944

Following the unsuccessful company-size attacks on 24 January, General Truscott ordered battalion-size assaults for the next day. The main attack was to be toward CISTERNA at 0500 hours with two battalions abreast. A battalion was to advance on each side of the CONCA - CISTERNA Road (1-30 Inf on the left and 2-15 Inf on the right). This attack was coordinated at division level through the respective regimental headquarters and did not have a single force commander. The 504th Parachute Regiment was to conduct a diversionary attack toward BORGO PIAVE.

1-30 Inf missed its Line of Departure (LD) time by one and a half hours due to transportation difficulties and did not jump off until 0630.(27) It crossed Bridge #12 and passed through F/2-30 advancing to within 200m (F978291) of the CLE PRATONE road junction at F980297, its objective, by 1000. The battalion was stopped by 2 Co/Pz Regt/Hermann Goering Division which was entrenched around the road junction. The Germans launched a counterattack with approximately two companies at 1500 hours that struck in the vicinity of Bridge #11. This attack was repulsed.(28) The 1-30 advanced no further on the 25th.

Although "advancing toward CISTERNA on the left of the CONCA - CISTERNA Road", the 1-30 Infantry was actually moving northeast on the CAMPOMORTO - CISTERNA Road. This road was separated from the CONCA - CISTERNA Road by 2-3,000 meters and the FEMINAMORTA CREEK. The advancing battalions were not mutually supporting.

2-15 Inf crossed the LD on schedule at 0500 and advanced north on the right side of the CONCA - CISTERNA Road reaching the 265 grid line by 0815 against light resistance. By 1120 the battalion had reached F999273 but resistance increased.(29) At 1300 the leading company was pinned down by several well dug in machineguns. C/751st Tank Bn lost three tanks in this engagement. The regimental commander now diverted 1-15 Inf from a planned attack that was to have taken the battalion into CISTERNA from the southeast along the BORGO PIAVE - CISTERNA Road. In the new mission, 1-15 was to cross to the west of the CONCA - CISTERNA Road and attack on the left of 2-15 Inf on the 26th.(30)

To the west of 1-30 Infantry, L/3-30 and its attached tank destroyers were still trying to dislodge 3 Co/Pz Regt/HG Division from the DELLA CROCETTA RJ (F950295). At 1420 K Co, 3-7 Inf was ordered to reinforce this attack by occupying a position on the road vicinity FONT NA NECCIA F9431 and then attacking southeast toward the DELLA CROCETTA RJ. By 1630 K/3-7 had reached F9431 and was digging in. A

platoon was sent to reinforce L/3-30; however, neither unit was able to drive the Germans off on the 25th. (31)

Two companies from 1st Battalion, 504th Parachute Regiment, with two platoons of engineers, attacked at 0500 across Bridge #5 toward BORGO PIAVE. They advanced as far as a second bridge located at G042249. The remaining elements of the regiment attacked across the MUSSOLINI CANAL at noon. 3-504th crossed Bridges #1 and 2 while 2-504th crossed at Bridges #3, 4 and 5. 2-504 reached BORGO PIAVE at 1815 where it dug in to await the inevitable German counterattack. (32)

On the divisions far left flank, the Rangers had continued to move gradually northward maintaining contact with the British 1st Division. By 25 Jan they were deployed from F882309 to F913290. (33) On their right 3-7 was deployed along the line F913290 to F933280. (34)

26 JANUARY 1944

By the afternoon of 25 January it was obvious to General Truscott that the forces employed were insufficient to get to CISTERNA. He therefore reorganized and attacked with two regiments each with two battalions abreast on the 26th. (35)

3-7 Infantry and the Ranger Force advanced to a line RJ F892234 - RJ F902338 - RJ F917326. 1st and 2d Battalions, 7th Infantry, the 31D reserve, moved to a new assembly area near CONCA (vic F9719) early in the morning of 26 Jan.

The road junction at CROCETTA (F950295) was siezed at 0800 by the combined assault of K/3-7 from the northwest and L/3-30 from the south. A/1-30 with a platoon of tanks and two tank destroyers moved up from Bridge #11 and relieved L/3-30 during the evening. The remainder of 1-30 Inf succeeded in capturing the RJ at CLE PRATONE F980297 in the morning when the German defenders withdrew. The three day battle had cost the 30th Infantry Regiment 25 KIA, 45 WIA and 8 Missing. (36)

Along the west (left) side of the CONCA - CISTERNA Road, 1-15 Inf attacked at 1400 to sieze the RJ at G022260 just north of Bridge #8. By evening A/1-15 had reached the road at G001254. At 2345 hours 1-15 Inf patrols made contact with 1-30 at F990280. (37) 2-15 continued to push north on the right side of the CONCA - CISTERNA road without much success.

In the east the 504th continued aggressive patrolling

and OP activity east of the MUSSOLINI CANAL.

It should be noted that during this period all reserve forces in each regiment and in the division were being used to prepare defensive positions on the south side of the MUSSOLINI CANAL which had been designated as the VI Corps Final Beachhead Line.

On the 26th a meeting was held between Field Marshall Kesselring, CIC Army Group C, and General Mackensen, Commander of XIV Army, to finalize a planned German counterattack on 28 January to wipe out the beachhead. The operation was postponed until 1 February to allow for the arrival of some additional units. Although the main attack was to be down the ALBANO ANZIO Road, a strong supporting attack was planned in the 3ID sector. The schwerpunkt unit for this assault was designated as Combat Group Konrad. It was to consist of elements from the Hermann Goering Pz Div and the 114th Infantry Division. Its mission was to attack south from the area west of CISTERNA to the ASTURA CREEK vic BORGO MONTELLO (also called CONCA). (38)

27 JANUARY 1944

General Truscott was convinced that he could take CISTERNA if he could employ the whole division. This plan was presented to General Lucas, the Corps Commander, on 26 January but disapproved as the units needed by 3ID were committed to the British attack on CAMPOLEONE. (39) On the 27th a VI Corps plan was issued for a multidivisional attack on 29 January. The main effort was to be the British 1st Division attack on CAMPOLEONE. The 3ID with the Rangers and 504th attached were to make the secondary attack. Their mission was to capture CISTERNA, cut Hwy #7 (the Appian Way) and to continue the advance toward VELLETRI. (40) Operations between 27 and 30 January were directed at positioning units for the attack (the operation was slipped by one day). The 3ID's western boundary was moved east to the CARANO STREAM to allow General Truscott to shift and concentrate forces. In the east the 179th Infantry Regiment assumed responsibility on the MUSSOLINI CANAL from Bridge #1 through Bridge #5. (41)

While Hqs 7th Inf (vic S.ANTONIO), 1-7 Inf (vic RJ#47 F965195) and 2-7 Inf (vic BORGO MONTELLO) remained in assembly areas preparing for the American attack on the 30th, 3-7 Inf was still in the line. At 0300 3-7 Inf was ordered to advance at 0530 from its positions vic F937314 and seize SPACCASSI and the road going to the southeast from SPACCASSI RJ F917326 to CARANO RJ F902338. By 1030 it had secured the objective destroying two guns, killing 5 and

capturing 2 Germans in the process.(42) During the night 3-7 pushed patrols 800 yards north up the road from the RJ at F918325 and up the FOSSO (stream) DE CARANO as far as the railroad to the west of CISTERNA.(43) Unknown to the Americans at this time was the fact that the railroad had been designated as the German Main Line of Resistance (MLR) and it was not just a delaying position on the approaches to VELLETRI. The units that the Germans had pushed south of CISTERNA had effectively bought enough time for I Parachute Corps to strengthen its defenses and hold CISTERNA.(44)

The 15th Infantry engaged in the only major operation on 27 Jan. Its mission was to attack in the afternoon and seize the line G002280 - G042270. The forward units started from positions just a few hundred yards north of the MUSSOLINI CANAL between Bridges #6-8. 3-15 Inf attacked to the northwest at 1300 and cut the CONCA - CISTERNA Road about the 28 grid line. By 1600 3-15 was at G009259 and in the evening it relieved 2-15 at F998272 eventually deploying throughout the area F9926 G0027. 2-15 withdrew to guard Bridges #5-8. 1-15 Inf attacked to the northeast at 1500 eventually establishing roadblocks at the following locations: G020267 (A Co), G020260 (B Co) and G026246 (C Co).(45)

1-30 Inf conducted a fire demonstration to the east at 1400 in support of the 15th Infantry attack.(46) 1-30 was relieved by 3-30 along the CARANO - CISTERNA Road. 3-30 was told not to practice light and sound discipline during the relief operation to give the impression that it was reinforcing rather than relieving 1-30 Inf. 3-30 occupied the area from CROCETTA RJ F950295 to RJ F980297 while 1-30 moved back to positions around Bridge #12 with its battalion CP in CAMPO MORTO.

By 0900 on the 27th, the Rangers had moved to a line RJ F892334 - RJ F902338 against light resistance.(48) The 504th continued to dig in along the MUSSOLINI CANAL.

28 JANUARY 1944

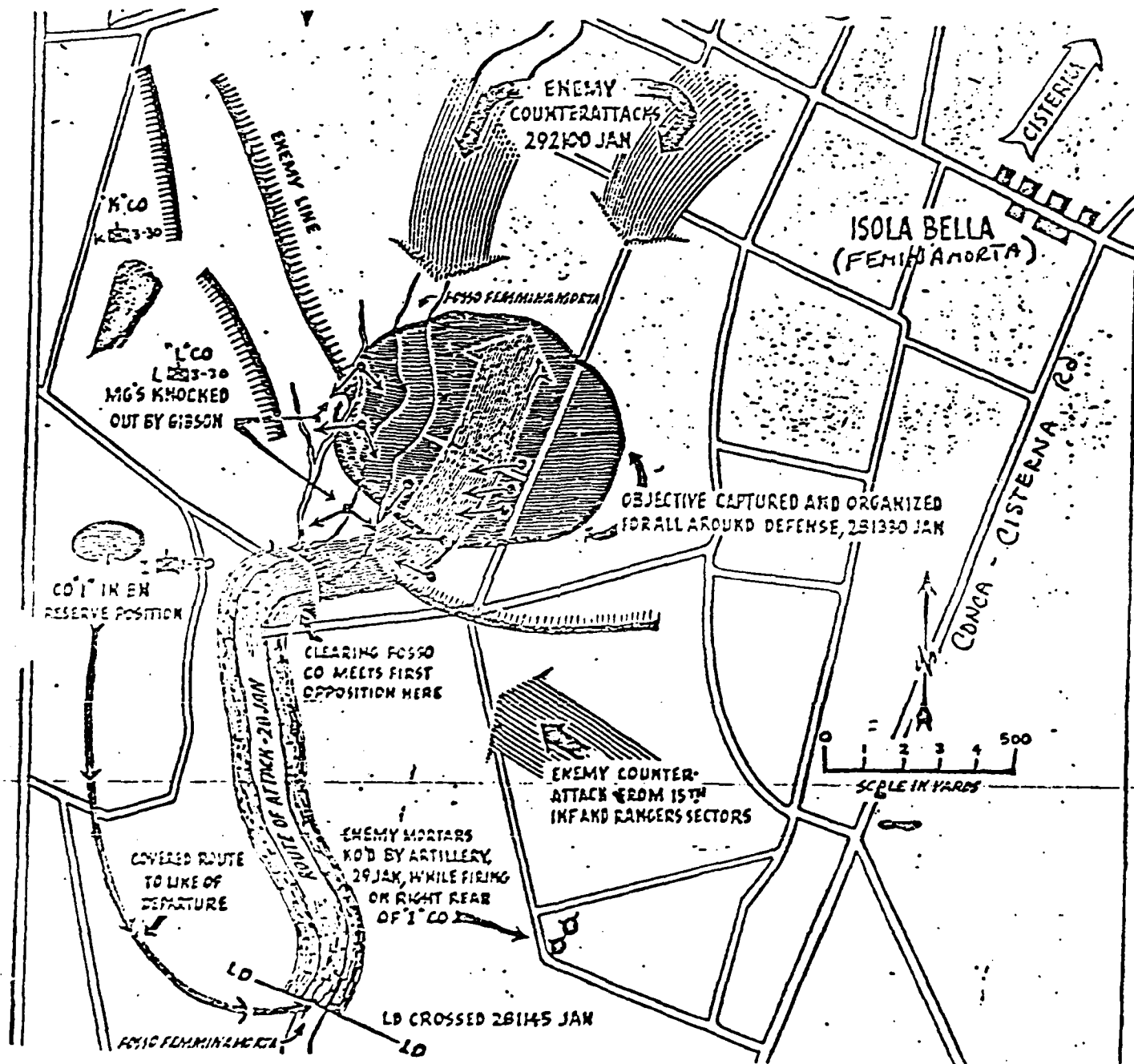
31D issued its order for the attack on 30 Jan. The 28th and 29th were spent moving units and reorganizing for the attack.

There was little activity in the area of the Ranger Force.

3-7 Inf was relieved by the 509th Parachute Battalion (from the 6615th Ranger Force) and began moving to an assembly area vic F925275 north of Bridges #11 and 12 and

south of the CARANO - CISTERNA Road.

The 30th Infantry conducted the only attack in the CID sector on this day. I/3-30 attacked at noon to sieze some houses at F985280 west of ISOLA BELLA (FEMINAMORTA). The Germans located there were forming a salient between 3-30 and the 15th Inf. The attack was fierce but successful, killing 46 Germans, wounding 35 and capturing 10. (50)



The 15th Infantry was located as follows: 1st Bn - 60126-0325, 2d Bn - vic 6004234 and 3d Bn - F9925-60027.

29 JANUARY 1944

"Plans for our attack on CISTERNA were carefully worked out and discussed at a meeting of all unit commanders the afternoon of 29 January. The 7th Infantry was assigned objectives astride Highway 7 northeast of town; 15th Infantry was assigned similar objectives southeast of the town on the highway. The Ranger Force was to capture and clean out the town itself by infiltration of two battalions one hour before H-hour. The 7th and 15th Infantry Regiments were to start one battalion each moving by infiltration at H-hour, following up with armor and more infantry prior to daylight, at an hour selected by each regimental commander. H-hour was 0200. The 30th Infantry was to hold the line between the 7th and 15th Regiments, act as Division reserve, and assist the other regiments by fire.

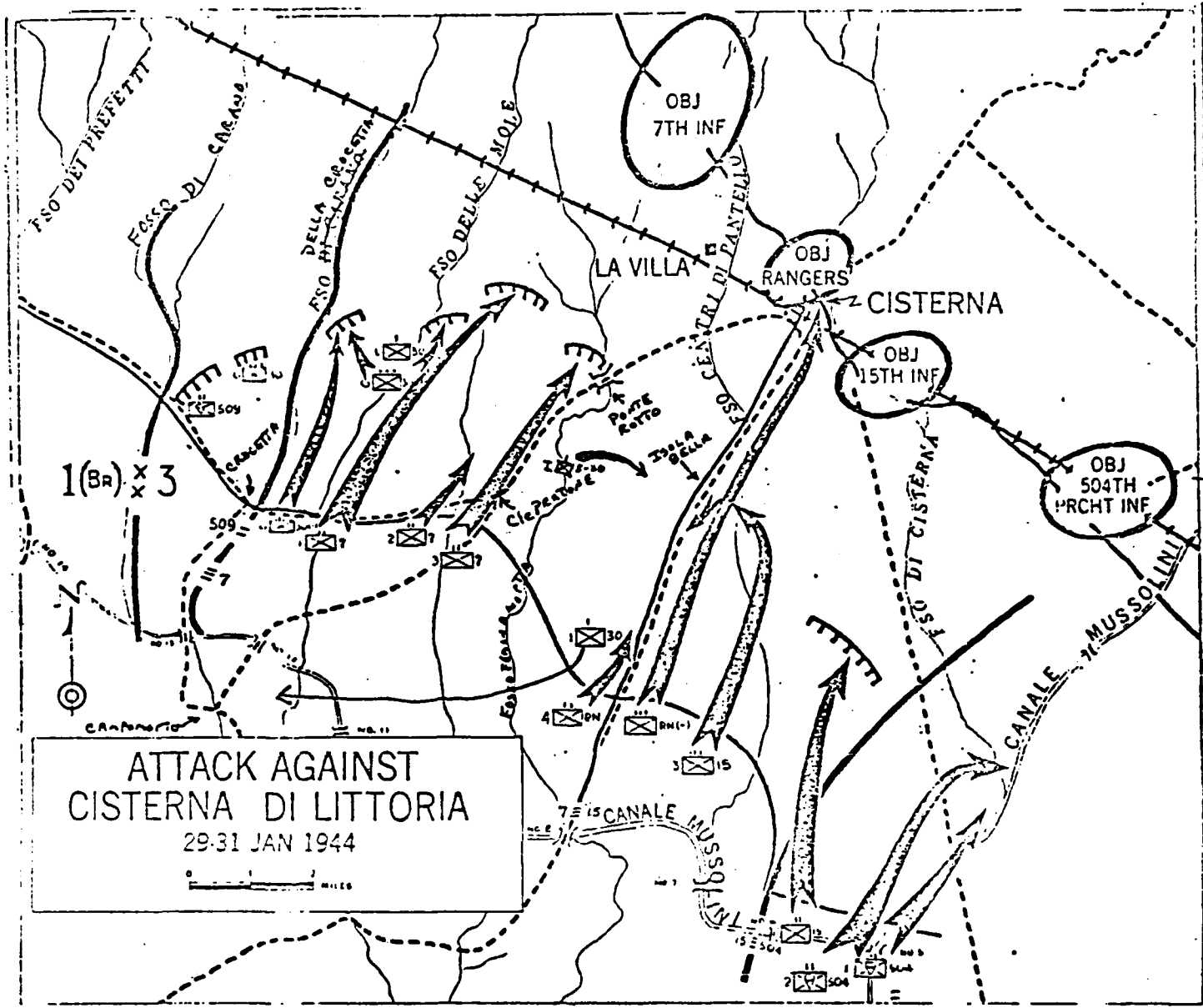
Corps order directed the attack and capture of the town, cutting of the highway, and preparation for resumption of the attack toward VELLETRI." (51)

3-7 Infantry completed its move to rejoin its regiment at 0530. The regiment then spent the day preparing for the next day's assault. The regimental CP moved to F958283 in the evening.

"G/2-30 Inf conducted a limited objective attack on the afternoon of 29 Jan occupying an area northeast of CARANO vic F9632 at 1500. This operation was launched to screen the assembly areas of the 7th Inf. (52) L Company was remained in position at F985280 just west of ISOLA BELLA I/3-30 successfully repulsed a counterattack at 2100 hours. (53)

The Rangers were relieved by the British. The 1st, 3d and 4th Ranger Bns moved to an assembly area vic F978195 on the morning of 29 January. The Heavy Weapons Company of the 179th Inf which had been attached was relieved. (55)

The relief of the 504th Parachute Regiment by the 179th Regt along the MUSSOLINI CANAL was completed in the morning. 3-504th was attached to the 1st British Division and left the 3ID sector. (56)



The 31D G2 estimate of 29 January was optimistic and totally wrong about the German intentions and capabilities.

The enemy at present disposes Hermann Goering Division on our right flank and front, and scattering of units from various larger formations, probably now under command of Third Panzer Grenadiers Division, on our left front. The enemy's attitude on our front is entirely defensive. He has maintained a rather loose and poorly organized line of outposts well to the east of the CANALE MUSSOLINI, south and southwest of CISTERNA DI LITTORIA, and south of the railroad embankment which runs northwest from CISTERNA. His patrolling has not been aggressive, as it has seldom penetrated to the point of seriously harassing our outposts; rather, our patrols have normally contacted

German security patrols near or within his own outpost line. His outpost line of resistance, or defensive line backing up his outposts, is believed to lie along the railway track itself, and may well be tied in with slight terrain eminences which begin to appear to the northeast and north of CISTERNA. His main line of resistance will undoubtedly be found on true high ground to the east and west of VELLETRI. Since we now effectively interdict Highway 7 with artillery fire, the Germans would hardly interpose a main line of resistance on less favorable ground this side of VELLETRI, especially in view of the fact that he must use all available time to complete and man a system of defensive works if he is to keep us off the COLLI LAZIALI and Highway 6.

...

The enemy's position regarding reserves is difficult to assess. His use of the 356th Fusileer (Rcn) Battalion, 120th Reconnaissance Battalion and 26th Reconnaissance Battalion in the immediate battle zone indicates that some or all of the 356th Division (L of C), 26th and 29th Panzer Grenadier Divisions may be earmarked for the ANZIO - NETTUNO beachhead. To date, however, the enemy has fed units into the line piecemeal as they have arrived, and there is no definite indication that he will depart from this practice by throwing one or more divisions entire against our positions in an organized counter-attack. Even if he were to do so, it is likely that the divisions proximity to the line would be discovered by air reconnaissance, prisoner of war or civilian reports before the counter-attack itself could be delivered.

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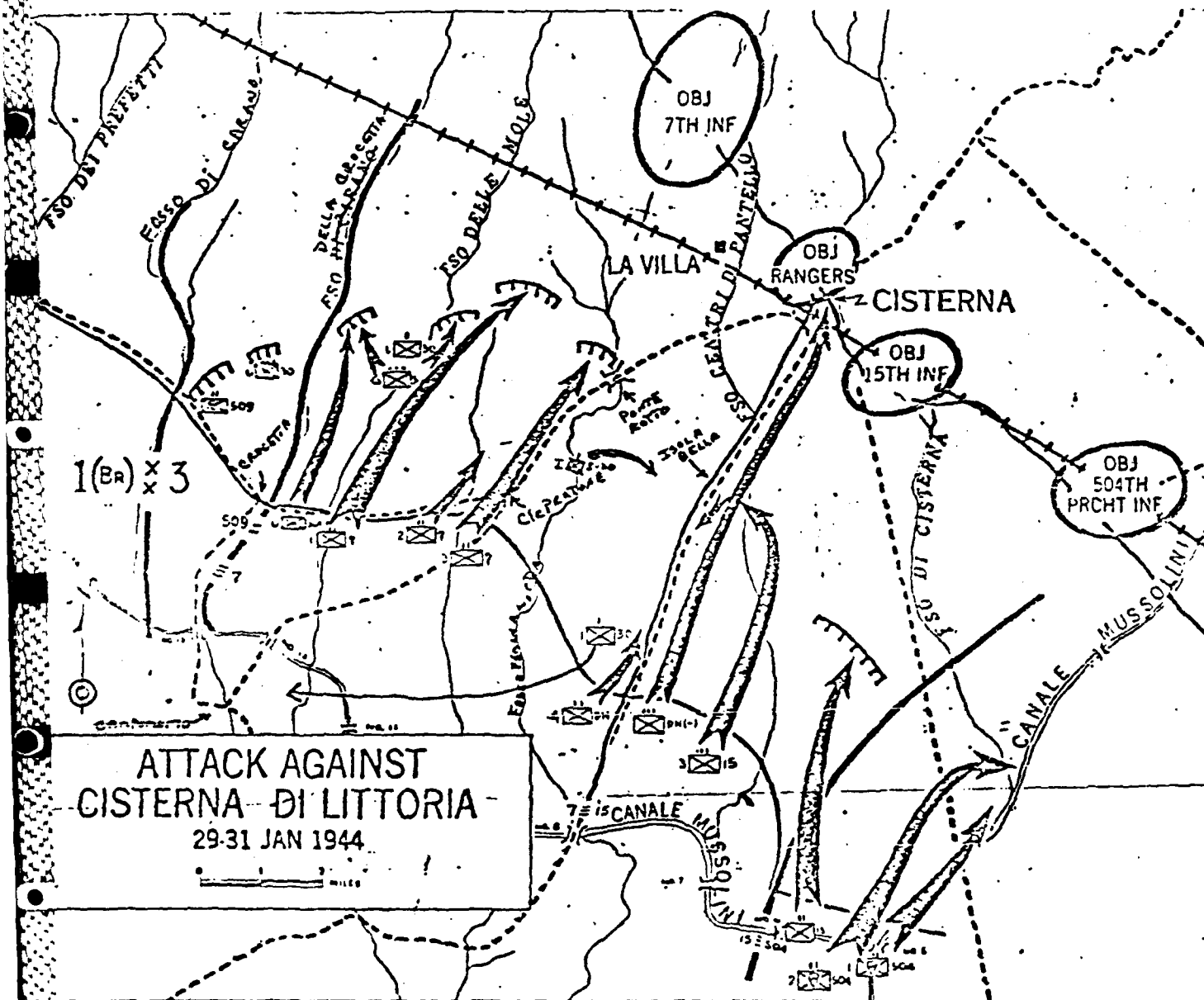
To sum up, it does not now seem probable that the enemy will soon deliver a major counter-attack involving units of division size; on the other hand, the enemy will probably resort to delaying action coupled with small-scale counter-attacks in an effort to grind us to a standstill, as on the CASSINO LINE. If he fails to do this on the COLLI LAZIALI, he will probably evacuate the CASSINO position, fight a rear-guard action across the TIBER and start all over again on a consolidated line across the peninsula."

The Germans in reality were forming up for a major counterattack scheduled for 1 February. Combat Group Konrad was assembling in the objective area of the 7th Infantry

Regt and the Hermann Goering Pz Division(+) was well dug in along the railroad south of CISTERNA.

30 JANUARY 1944

The 30th was a day of intense combat across the entire 31D front.



The operation began at 0100 with the 1st Ranger Bn crossing the MUSSOLINI CANAL and the entering the PANTANO DITCH (FOSSO DEL BOTTAGONE) which ran north to CISTERNA. The 3d Ranger Bn followed the 1st Bn at a 15 minute interval. At 0235, 1st Rangers came under machinegun fire

vic G0329 but continued on. (58) At 0248 the four radio operators for the 3d Bn were reported lost. (59) Later 1st Bn split in half when the rear three companies lost contact with the lead three companies. The 3d Bn came under German tank fire which killed Major Alyah, the battalion commander, but they continued on to reestablish contact with the 1st Bn. By 0545, first light, the Rangers were at a road about 1000m below CISTERNA. By this time the 7th, 15th and 504th attacks had kicked off and the Germans may have been on alert. The lead three Ranger companies attempted to sprint to CISTERNA across the open field before the sun rose. They passed through a German bivouac area bayoneting and knifing a number of sleeping Germans and then continued on. When the Rangers were about 300m short of the town the Germans opened up with small arms, machineguns, flak wagons and tanks trapping the lead companies in the open. The remaining three companies and the 3d Bn destroyed two tanks on the road at the mouth of the PANTANO DITCH and pushed forward to linkup with the lead companies. They also became trapped in the open, flat fields. By noon 767 of the 773 men making the attack were either killed or captured.

42 men out of a 43 man platoon from the 3d Recon Troop were also wiped out with the Ranger Force. This platoon had apparently penetrated NW of CISTERNA and then followed a road toward the town. They were trapped and destroyed at a German roadblock. (60)

The 4th Ranger Bn jumped off at 0200 and headed up the CONCA CISTERNA Road. By 0340 it was pinned down by German machine guns entrenched around the RJ at G007293 (2000m south of ISOLA BELLA). Tanks and tank destroyers were sent forward but two were quickly knocked out by mines when they attempted to maneuver off of the road to flank the German position. The 4th Bn was not able to advance further on 30 January. (61)

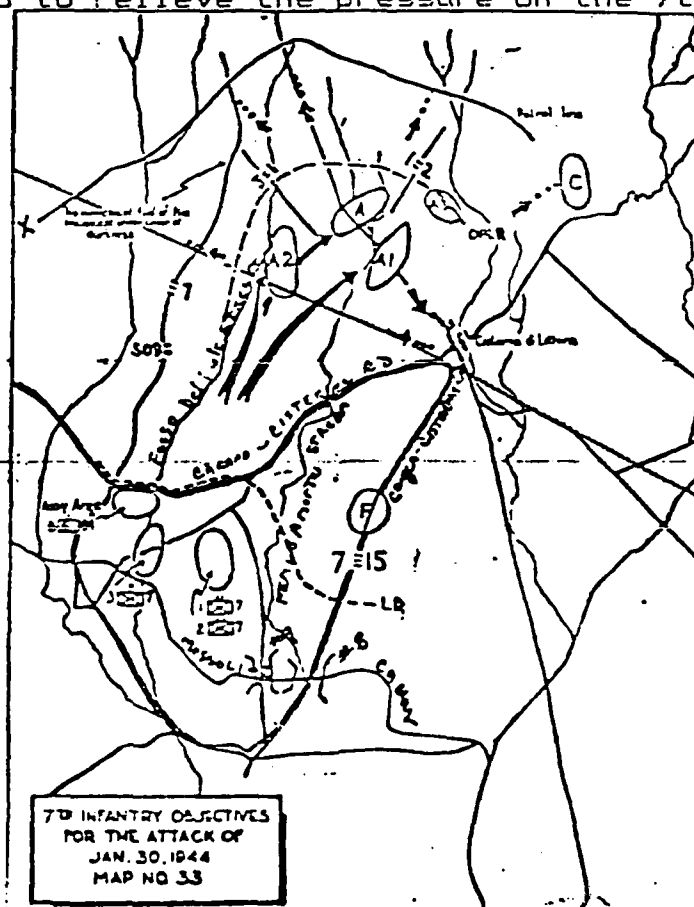
~~15th Infantry attacked to the right of the Rangers with~~ the mission of clearing the CISTERNA - BORGO PIAVE Road and Highway #7 between G038274 and G035286. 1-15 Inf(+) crossed the LD N of Bridge #6 at 0200 and advanced to within 1500m of the BORGO PIAVE Road by 0540. B/1-15 was heavily engaged at G030268. Bv 1110 A/1-15 was at G031277. B/1-15 at G031271 and C/1-15 was following A Co. B/751st tanks knocked out a Mark IV at this time. By 1510 B/1-15 had pushed to G037274 and this was the limit of advance of the 1st Bn this day. The attack had shattered two companies from the Hermann Goering Pz Division.

3-15 was to advance on the regimental objective by moving up the right side of the CONCA - CISTERNA Road and then swing to the right between ISOLA BELLA and 1-15. This

mission was changed in the morning to support of the 4th Ranger Bn's breakthrough at ISOLA BELLA. 3-15 was ordered to move to G013293 then attack to the left and sieze the RJ at G008292 just east of ISOLA BELLA. After crossing the LD at 0630 3-15 was in position to attack the RJ at 1030. It was unable to completely secure the RJ until the next day due to the heavy German resistance. During the 30th 2-15 was not committed but was given an attack warning order that evening. (62)

1/3-30 located in the FEMINAMORTA CREEK just west of ISOLA BELLA was ordered to attack the village from the west. It did so on the night of 30-31 January killing 6 and capturing 27 in the westernmost buildings of ISOLA BELLA. The Germans who doggedly defended the village were from the 356th Reconnaissance Bn, 356th Infantry Division. (63)

G/2-30 was ordered to support the 7th Infantry attack by siezing an objective between F970315 and F980315. The company accomplished this mission in the afternoon against extremely heavy opposition incurring 11 wounded and 9 killed. (64) Because the attack was over 1500m west of 1-7 Infantry's positions and the German force was so large, the attack failed to relieve the pressure on the 7th Infantry.



1-7 Infantry crossed its LD (CROCETTA RJ F950295 - CLE

PRATANO RJ F980297) at 0200 hours and attempted to infiltrate to its objective by moving due north up the FOSSO DEL MOLE (FOSSO PANE E VINO).(65) The battalion was quickly engaged by a German machinegun that took an hour to drive away. By 0400 the battalion had advanced about 1500m (F977315) northwest of CLE PRATONE where it came under heavy mortar, artillery and machinegun fire.(66) The 1-7 Inf reached a small rise on the 31 grid line about 0500 (67) and was pinned down. 2-7 Inf attacked at 1045 hours to relieve the pressure on the 1st Bn. It jumped off from F973303 and attacked NE parallel to the CARANO CISTERNA Road to sieze HILL 83 at F992012.(68) Shortly after 1200 2-7 Infantry was hit with a strong counterattack by a unit from the 1st Parachute Division which forced it to withdraw to the FOSSO DI S. MARIA streambed near PRATONE where it dug in and reorganized. A second German attack at 1705 was repelled from this location. The regimental commander committed his 3d Battalion with armor support to the attack at 1645. The 3-7 Inf was to continue the attack begun by 2-7 and sieze HILL 83 and the PONTE ROTTO RJ. By 1915 3-7 had fought its way up to the 2-7's positions north of CLE PRATONE and advanced only 200m more in the next three hours.(69) The 7th Infantry battles were to continue throughout the night against elements of the 356th Reconnaissance Battalion.

The 509th Parachute Battalion located at F945305 was also committed in an attack to relieve pressure on the 7th Infantry. Attacking to the west of G/2-30, it moved to the north just after 1200 hours. It received heavy fire at F942334, withdrew and dug in along the 315 grid line. At 2020 hours the 509th was attached to the 30th Infantry.(70)

The 504th Parachute Regiment attacked at 0200 hours moving NE from its LD just north of Bridge #5. 1-504th reached a bridge at G042250 by 0400 but it was blown up by the retreating Germans. The Germans counterattacked at 1000 but 1-504 held killing 18 and capturing one. 2-504th, with its attached tanks and half tracks, passed through and reached a second bridge over the CISTERNA CREEK (G048259) by 0755. It then received a change in mission. The battalion was ordered to move NW up the road (BORGO PIAVE - CISTERNA) to relieve pressure on 1-15 Inf which was pinned down on the west side of the road.(71) At 1545 200 Germans from the 7th Luftwaffe Jaeger Bn struck from the south vic G042250 but were driven off.(72)

The Germans had not been thrown off balance by the operations of the 3ID but rather they were continuing to prepare for their offensive.

"In the early morning, enemy infantry, supported by tanks, attacked in the area TBA. DI. M GARIBALDI

(CARAND,F940313) - CANALE MUSSOLINI. The first attack force made several penetrations, which were repulsed by local counterattacks. Enemy units which advanced to CISTERNA (G0232) were destroyed. During the morning, the enemy began a new counterattack, with a strong infantry force, northeast of TBA. DI M GARIBALDI - ISOLA BELLA (G006294). Our forces counterattacked, and fought heavily until darkness. A defensive front from ISOLA BELLA to BM 31, 6km southeast of ISOLA BELLA, was restored.

An enemy breakthrough from the beachhead, had to be prevented and a closed main line of resistance, in the sector of the 3d Panzer Grenadier Division had to be restored. In the sector of the Panzer Division Hermann Goering, the 26th Panzer Division was to counterattack the 3d American Infantry Division, which had penetrated south of CISTERNA. The 26th Panzer Division was concentrated in the area north of CISTERNA, and units of the 114th Jaeger Division, which have arrived in the area south of VELLETRI, were attached, as Regimental Group "Berger" to the Panzer Division Hermann Goering".(73)

In addition to the staunch defensive work of the Hermann Goering Pz Division the 715th Division began to arrive near CISTERNA on the morning of 30 January. Its arriving elements were immediately committed to the battle.(74)

Field Marshall Kesselring remarked on this period,"The violent attacks on CISTERNA on 25 January by the American VI Corps and again on 31 January on CISTERNA and CAMPOLEONE proved my judgement correct - small local enemy advances were bought with heavy losses. Von Mackensen was thus able, without fear of any serious crisis, to assemble, instruct and send into action the reinforcements which now continued arriving until the end of the month."(75)

31 JANUARY 1944

During the night General Truscott ordered a reorganization and scheduled intense artillery preparations for the morning before continuing the attack in the afternoon.(76) "Instead of driving toward HWY 7 north and south of CISTERNA they were to advance up the PONTE ROTTO and ISOLA BELLA Roads to converge on the town itself. This time General Truscott employed the full weight of all his supporting weapons to beat down the German defenses which had held up the previous day's attack. The infantry advance was preceded by successive artillery concentrations.

Division and attached artillery fired 1,216 missions (630 of them observed) during 31 January. The Air Force laid a smoke screen behind CISTERNA at daylight to conceal the attack, and the 84th Chemical Battalion put down screening white phosphorus fire. Assault guns, tanks, and tank destroyers accompanied the infantry. Although extremely heavy air cooperation was planned, including an attack on CISTERNA a H-hour by 70 B-26's, most of the program was cancelled because of low clouds." (77)

Moving from left to right across the division front the operation continued as follows.

The 509th Parachute Bn, now attached to the 30th Inf, was relieved by elements of the 1st British Division when the 3ID boundary was shifted east to the 94 grid line. The 509th occupied the area vic F9532 and remained in contact with some enemy units at F936314. (78)

The 30th Infantry, less its 1st Bn, continued to protect the left flank of the 7th Infantry. G/2-30 continued to hold vic F964323 along the FOSSO DELLA CROCETTA (FORMAL DEL BOVE). The 2d Bn (-G Co) was in regimental reserve. 3-30 Inf became division reserve at 2030 hours and moved to an assembly area NE of CONCA. 1-30 Inf was attached to the 7th Infantry and its actions are covered below.

1-7 Infantry located NW of CLE PRATONE between the FOSSO DEL MOLE and FOSSO DI FEMINAMORTA vic F977315. repulsed a German counterattack at 0045. 1st Bn attacked north toward the railroad at 1400 hours after its supporting tanks and tank destroyers had caught up after traversing the deep drainage ditches in the area. It advanced north in continuous contact finally reaching the railroad cut at 1600. 150 Germans were captured in the process. The Germans had destroyed the on bridge across the railroad cut preventing further movement to the north. The battalion withdrew 400m south and set up a perimeter defense. It succeeded in stopping a German counterattack from its rear at 1930 hours. This was the last time a 3ID unit would get across the railroad tracks for four months. (79)

2-7 Inf moved north during the night to the next RJ north of CLE PRATONE. It was attempting to maintain contact with 1-7 Inf. During the morning it engaged several groups of bypassed Germans. (80)

At 0530, the 3-7th Inf, which had attacked throughout the night, finally captured HILL 83 (F992012). The Germans, however, blew the bridge at PONTE ROTTO before it could be captured. (81) The 3d Bn dug in on the hill.

1-30th Inf located at PONTAN DI AMICI vic Bridge #12 was attached to the 7th Infantry at 0545 hours. The line of departure for its attack was to be the FOSSO DI FEMINAMORTA streambed vic F996313. Its mission was to attack toward the east on the south side of the CARANO - CISTERNA Road at 1400 hours. Before 1-30th could reach the LD, 14 German tanks attacked down the road from CISTERNA toward PONTE ROTTO. American tanks and tank destroyers knocked out five before the Germans withdrew. The 1-30th crossed the LD at 1625 but was unable to advance more than 1500m before nightfall despite the supporting fires of three artillery battalions. (82)

During the morning, 4th Ranger Bn cleared the last resistance on the CONCA - CISTERNA Road below ISOLA BELLA while 3-15 Inf cleared the last of the buildings in the village. At 1500 hours, 2-15 Inf, which had been uncommitted, passed through 3-15 and attacked toward CISTERNA on the left side of the road. Despite the massed fires from three artillery battalions, 2-15 advanced only half the distance to CISTERNA before it was stopped vic G018310. 3-15 attempted to move NE from ISOLA BELLA on a lateral road but was hit by 7 German tanks moving crosscountry from CISTERNA. A single M10 TD hit one German tank and fortunately the others withdrew. 1-15 Inf continued its attack to the north reaching G031302 on the BORGO FIAVE - CISTERNA Road where it was attacked by tanks and infantry who destroyed two American TD's and a tank. This assault forced 1-15 Inf to withdraw 1000m to a line G027275 - G031275 and dig in. (83)

The increased use of German armor on the 31st was due to the arrival of units from the 26th Panzer Division.

1 February 1944

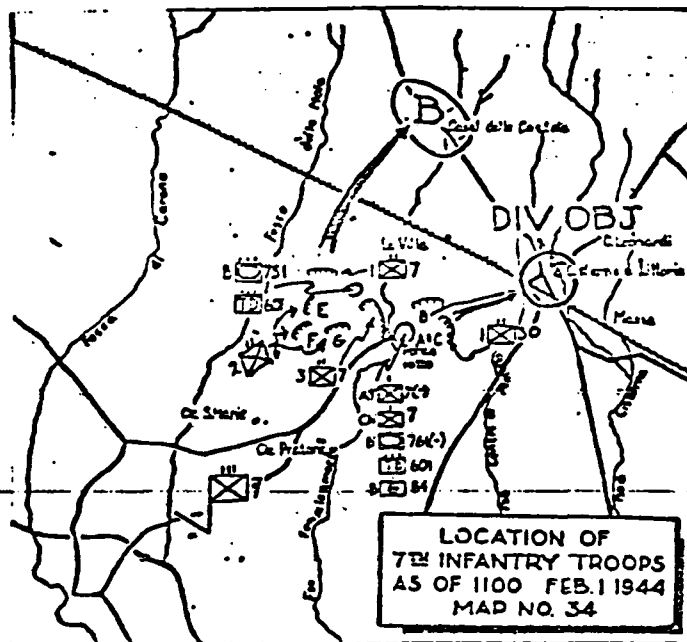
This day was to see the conclusion of the First Battle of CISTERNA and was to mark the limit of advance of the 3ID until 23 May 1944. By the end of the day the division and the entire VI Corps would go over to the defensive. The reason was twofold: 1) Casualties had been extremely heavy in the first 11 days of the campaign (84) and 2) General Clarke, the 5th Army Commander, was now aware of the impending German offensive from his ULTRA intelligence and so he ordered his troops to dig in. (85)

On the division's left flank, the 509th Parachute Bn remained dug in on the east side of the FOSSO DI CARANO from the CARANO RJ north to where they tied in with G/2-30 Inf vic F964323. It repelled a platoon sized attack at 2220

hours.

G/2-30, although tied in with the 509th on its left, could not establish contact with 2-7th Inf across the FOSSO DEL MOLE (FOSSO FANE E VINO) on its right. The 2d Bn (-6 Co), which was in regimental reserve at F949295, was committed in the afternoon to close the gap. It attacked north up both sides of the FOSSO DEL MOLE starting from F966298 and was able make contact with both units. (86) 3-30 Inf remained in division reserve NE of CONCA.

In the 7th Inf sector, contact was lost with 1-7 Inf for most of the day. The unit was still located in the salient vic F990322. It remained in position all day absorbing artillery and repeated ground attacks by the newly arrived 71st Infantry Division but it did not withdraw. In the evening 1-7 was relieved by 2-7 and moved south to the regimental reserve. When relieved there were only 117 men from the battalion left on the position. Before relieving 2-7 the 1st Bn had spent the day beating off German counterattacks vic F9832. 3-7 Inf remaining entrenched around HILL 83 throughout the day.



At dawn the 1-30 Inf once again attempted to push east on the CARANO - CISTERNA Road. At 0830 it was about 1500m from Cisterna where the road crosses the PANTANO DITCH when a 10 minute barrage followed by a battalion-sized, tank reinforced counterattack struck. 1-30th moved no further forward and had in fact reached the limit of its supporting artillery fires. 1-30th was withdrawn the next day marking the end of the 3ID advance in this sector also. (87)

2-15 Inf which had advanced the farthest north on the CONCA CISTERNA Road, remained pinned down all day vic G0231. The 3d Bn which had attacked NE from ISOLA BELLA the day before, continued its advance from G022296 at 0910 hours. The battalion was unable to move all day and was counterattacked at 1855 by a German company. 1-15 Inf attempted to sieze the RJ at G035287 at 1300 hours but was unable to advance passed G033283 where the Germans held a group of houses. (88)

The 504th Parachute Regiment remained dugin along the north bank of the MUSSOLINI CANAL from Bridge #5 to the FOSSO CISTERNA then north on the wqest bank of that stream.

Although the American attack had been pushed for three days, by 1 February the German commanders still considered their main line of resistance intact along the railroad bed. (89) There was concern in the I Parachute Corps and 14th Army Headquarters over the losses sustained by the Hermann Goering Pz Division; however Field Marshall Kesselring continued to plan for his copunteroffensive to push the Allies into the sea. The offensive was postponed two weeks to allow the units to recuperate from the 5,500 losses they had sustained, but the German commander was still on the offensive. (90)

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SECTION V

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ACTION

V. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ACTION

A. Short Term

The battle at Anzio was almost fore-ordained when the Germans made the decision to contest the Allied advance from Naples north to Rome. The geography of the Italian peninsula dictated an amphibious operation to preclude slow movement and high casualty rates in an overland advance. The decision to execute Operation Shingle was a gamble that was reached in an uncommon manner, characterized by distrust and conflict among the allied leaders. The United States, almost from the outset, was planning a major thrust in Europe while the British believed the key was to attack the Axis powers through the Mediterranean. The British concept was to fight on both the Mediterranean and Russian fronts thereby weakening the German's ability to counter a climactic Allied invasion in Europe. The Allies perceived the Italian campaign as a stroke to drive Italy out of the war and force the withdrawal of German troops, thus providing strategic airfields and bases from which to attack Greece and southern France. With the surrender of Italy, Hitler had no thoughts of defending south of Rome and he was concerned about an Allied amphibious invasion that would cut off his units in southern Italy. The German strategic objective was projected as a withdrawal to defensive positions in northern Italy, while the Allied objective was to bleed the strength of the Germans in preparation for a European invasion. Thus the stage was set for the Salerno invasion and the subsequent attack at Anzio. The dictate of the Allied advance on the ground dictated a

surprise amphibious assault at Anzio to continue movement toward the one clear objective, the capture of Rome, directed by Eisenhower. Alexander's concept of the mission of the VI Corps was to launch a seaborne landing at Anzio and move toward the Alban hills in support of the 5th Army advance on the mainland. This, he believed, would insure the rapid capture of Rome.

The primary mission of Lucas' corps was to seize and secure a beachhead. Clark had expected nothing more and he believed that if the situation presented itself Lucas could make the decision whether or not to continue the attack to the Alban hills. Clark's primary interest was the securing of a beachhead. The complexity of the amphibious assault landing is astounding. Planning, rehearsal, and execution must be precise and encompass all activities from training, to loading sequentially aboard the ships, to attacking, and then supporting the force. The preparations proved fruitful with the accomplishment of a relatively unopposed landing at the proper locations, on time, and with complete surprise. The Germans had not detected the preparation nor the execution of Operation Shingle prior to the landing. By midnight of the first day, with 90% of the personnel and equipment ashore, the port intact, and the beachhead secure the amphibious assault was considered a success. Clark's plan to solidify the Cassino line had been achieved and as a bonus the German reserves from Rome had been committed. The way appeared clear for Lucas to advance. The reaction of the Germans, upon learning of the success at Anzio, was to reinforce the front established there. During the following days Lucas, cautioned by Clark to remember Salerno, chose not to

rapidly exploit the successful assault but rather to expand the beachhead. As this became to the Germans, it became a matter of time to see who could prepare an attack first. The ensuing attack by Lucas on 29 January was stopped short of its objective, the Alban hills, and he was forced to remain in the beachhead area. During the initial days of operation the port was functioning so efficiently as to be ten days ahead of the original off-loading schedule. On 1 February Clark directed a switch to a defensive posture in preparation for the anticipated German counterattacks.

The amphibious assault was considered a success. It went as planned and was smooth and efficient in execution. There were many contributing factors to this successful landing such as:

1. complete planning
2. no significant weather
3. landing on schedule and where planned
4. no significant defensive obstacles
5. complete surprise

Although tactically it was a successful landing it turned out to be a disappointment since it did not produce the anticipated results, the expeditious capture of Rome. In this sense it may be considered a strategic failure. The decision of the ground commander not to reinforce success and continue the attack was to determine the course of events for the entire operation. These first days of Operation Shingle proved to be the watershed for its subsequent conduct until the eventual breakout from the

beachhead.

The action at Anzio, evaluated from the Axis point of view, can also be considered a failure. The Allies attempt to draw the German strength away from Europe was successful. Hitler reacted by authorizing reinforcements from southern France, Yugoslavia, and Germany to move to Italy to counter the offensive. He expected further attacks on his southern flank before a main assault in France.

LONG-TERM SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ACTION

Third Infantry Division's (3ID) contribution to Operation SHINGLE was important in that it succeeded in conducting a deliberate amphibious assault that completely surprised the enemy. The division, as a component of the VI Corps fulfilled the first half of their mission. General Clark's Field Order No. 5 to VI Corps was: a. to seize and secure a beachhead in the vicinity of Anzio b. advance on Colli Laziali. How VI Corps' performance at Anzio impacted on the long-term objectives of either the Allies or the Axis powers depends on the interpretation of success in the execution of part "b" of the mission. The objective was to cut the enemy's main line of communications in the Colli Laziali, an area south of Rome, and threaten the rear of the German 10th Army. For the 3ID this meant seizing Highway 7 and controlling the transportation hub of Cisterna.

Within the time parameters of 22 January 1944 through 1 February 1944 it can only be said that the tactical amphibious portion was a success but the mission in total was a failure. Neither 3ID nor any element of VI Corps was able to complete the mission. Ultimately SHINGLE was a success but it took three and one half more months and large reinforcements for the 5th US Army to link up with VI Corps. The "success" was aided by the Anzio second front that so overtaxed the scarce German resources that their interior lines advantage was useless. Anzio was just far enough away from the Gustav Line to preclude timely shifting of forces and, the German reserves were just too few. SHINGLE caused a total of 12 enemy divisions to be diverted, of which no less than seven divisions

were always opposing VI Corps. These German divisions were vital strategic reserve forces stripped from the Balkans, Southern France, and Northern Italy. Utilization of these divisions was to the detriment of the war effort on the Gustav Line, the Eastern Front, and the home land defenses to counter the invasion looming from across the English Channel.

Germany's effort during Anzio was a catastrophic strategic failure. Tactically, the Germans were successful in most engagements. In Hitler's eyes Anzio was vital to retaining Italy through which Germany influenced the Mediterranean Sea. Additionally, Italy was a buffer against excursions into France and eventually Germany. Anzio, to the Germans, was a decisive battle. The same can not be said for the Allies--there were other ways of gaining access to Southern France(Operation Anvil). Hitler's worst fears were realized when Germany lost the Gustav Line and the Allied forces linked up. The efforts to keep Anzio isolated cost the Germans 50,000 men. The fall of Rome was a morale loss(the first Axis capital to fall) that coupled with Anzio began the decline from which Germany would never recover. Operation Overlord and the Eastern Front battles completed the fall of the 3rd Reich.

MILITARY "LESSONS LEARNED"

A number of lessons relearned can be gleaned from SHINGLE. The leadership almost caused the beachhead to be the largest self-supporting POW camp in the world as Axis Sally once claimed. At the very top the leadership failed in a major duty of mission guidance. General Alexander's orders to General Clark and finally to

General Lucas were not transmitted faithfully. General Clark was deliberately vague because he was unsure of his ability to link up and of the German's reaction to SHINGLE. Rather than being vague due to contingencies orders must be precise to preclude erroneous interpretation. Another facet of the leadership bungles was the selection of the VI Corps commander. By the time flag rank is achieved a person is type cast and a known quantity. The Allies got just what they asked for--an experience, no-nonsense commander who put together the amphibious assault in weeks, a tremendous accomplishment. Lucas' style; however, was not the aggressive "charge the hill" soldier necessary for the subsequent operations. Leadership for the Germans was also problematic because of Hitler's penchant for managing at the tactical level thereby negating the leadership strengths in the field. Doctrinally, the German leaders were more advanced than the Allies.

The Germans used a true combined arms team to wage war. Their forces used the Luftwaffe, artillery, engineers, armor, and mechanized (panzer grenadiers) mix to good advantage. The Allies were still learning about CAS and never used combined arms on the scale of the Germans. Too often Allied tanks were in an infantry support role exclusively.. Operationally, the Germans were excellent, they systematically searched for the weakest point and exploited that situation as their schwerpunkt(main effort) with the heavy mobile forces. This concept required flexible command and capable leaders, especially the junior leaders. Both sides had the capable leaders, but the Allies were too methodical and predictable in the upper echelons--this was to cost them a number of opportunities. Lucas

could have at least secured the Cisterna and Compoleone transportation hubs for no other reason than to clear a major obstacle (the Mussolini Canal) and to control major avenues of approach into the beachhead. This missed opportunity^{problem} was not happening exclusively to the Allies. Even the Germans were unable to always capitalize on opportune events. Limited assets lent caution to any action that was not assured of success. Additionally, the success had to be quick because protracted engagements meant pyrrhic victories at best.

Air support was problem for both sides. The Luftwaffe was decimated and could provide only marginal pursuit support, supply, and even less strategic forces. The Allied air assets were numerous but less attuned to the maneuver elements plus they were based too far away to provide full daylight^h service. The Germans therefor had a two hour uncontested window of operations at sunrise and sunset. Both sides had difficulty with their air elements in the air interdiction missions. Air power was ineffective in isolating the beachhead from both points of view. The same could be said of the air arms' capability to halt rear area logistical functions, the best results were mere restrictions in traffic. The levels of BDA claimed by the air arms were never realized. Air power at this time was purely a fair weather tool and the reliance on air assets by both sides was misplaced. Tomorrow's reliance on air power may be similarly misplaced due to the ADA umbrella of the Threat.

A good deal of what was accomplished at Anzio was due to the corrective actions taken on the Salerno operations. The German reaction plan that surprised Lucas with its swiftness is a good example. Field Marshal Kesselring learned to use the highly mobile

and well armed recon elements as emergency forces until the heavy units could be deployed. Salerno also taught the Germans to defend in depth with less experienced soldiers, establish a mobile reserve of experienced troops that is sited well forward, and to commit the reserves totally. The Allies also gained enormous amounts of experience from Salerno, and Anzio that was applied to Overlord. Anzio taught the Allies to: provide ample landing force to establish the beachhead, to break out as soon as possible to retain the initiative, that envelopments whether seaborne or vertical must be mutually supporting in their effect on the enemy (VI Corps was too far from 5th US Army). The successful leader then and now must respond to change and adopt those methods that preclude repetition of mistakes from past operations.

That need to capitalize on history's lessons is no less important today. Probably the most important aspect to learn is that you must know your enemy. Kesselring knew Lucas to be cautious and instead of falling back to the Alban Hills he risked moving forward and dug in south of Cisterna thereby surprising 3ID and VI Corps and stopping their thrust. Knowledge of Allied operations repeatedly allowed the Germans to use mobile forces to blunt the Allied attacks. Knowledge of your own capabilities and objectives as well as your Allies' is crucial.

Operation SHINGLE was a politically contrived battle that force fit military and intelligence considerations instead of the reverse. Feasibility criteria were not the driving factors. For political reasons the strategic intelligence from the British was overly optimistic. Politics aside, the intelligence effort was poor.

On the tactical level the data failed to reach the operators. Lucas did not know that he was facing two less divisions than forecast until it was too late. In another instance of intelligence error air recon photographs misinterpreted brush covered tank ditches as hedges. During the 3ID attack south of Cisterna these ditches prevented the tanks from reaching the ambushed Rangers--approximately 770 men were lost. The point is that there were problems identified earlier with the quality of the photographs, sensitive areas such as assault routes, should have been verified with ground patrols. Intelligence, regardless of the source, Allied or our own, must be checked for accuracy. This will be even more crucial for tomorrow's war because of our inability to afford battalion sized losses.

In the tactical sense Anzio teaches the dangers of using a light force (the Rangers) without having organic anti-tank weapons when operating in a mechanized or armor environment. VI Corps also had a problem in that it was an inexperienced force. It had seen a 115% turnover of lieutenants since Sicily. The Rangers were also so inexperienced that they had problems with night operations in practice and on the actual operation they had one battalion split up--they too had lost too much experience in casualties. These faults were extremely costly later. The Germans were not immune to these problems. The great bulk of the troops used initially to block VI Corps were medical cases from Rome, reconstituting units, or newly formed units. The Germans also committed an inexperienced demonstration regiment, at Hitler's insistence, that failed miserably. As always, training and experience are crucial to surviving and winning. An army that does not prepare for war and its attrition will not survive, let alone win.

One of SHINGLE's more notable lessons applicable to today was the effort necessary to make a joint, international, and service amphibious operation work. The forces had to then, as we must now in NATO, learn to reconcile differences in language, experience, doctrine, tactics, and logistical needs. The thorough understanding of Allies and sister service capabilities is essential. During the next war we will not be the side with the overwhelming forces and logistical system that will allow errors of the magnitude found in SHINGLE. If a conflict occurs in Europe the Soviets will have the interior lines advantage and size edge. We in turn will be like the Germans during WWII. They were severely extended, had little reserves, and had scant room for error. Those tactics used by Germany of infiltrating units forward, preparations throughout the enemy's position, determining the weak point, and exploiting that situation with a strong mobile force from positions well forward seem to be much alike our modern "win" doctrine.

Fight outnumbered and win! This could well have been the phrase used in WWII by the German Army Staff. Anzio contributed little that was wholly new in the field of military knowledge. The principles of war still apply. We will fight by coordinating our efforts to capitalize on strengths and minimize weaknesses. Application of these timeless concepts is where Anzio's operations fell short tactically. Operation SHINGLE also erred in the strategic arena by overestimating the effect that the landings would have on German High Command and by underestimating the German capacity and resolve to counter their operations. The lesson is to learn from history and to know your enemy.

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